Doctrines de Boerhaave

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THE

TEMPLE OF TRUTH.

INSPICIAS.

Charles Edward De Coetlogon

THE

TEMPLE OF TRUTH:

OR,

THE BEST SYSTEM

OF

REASON, PHILOSOPHY, VIRTUE, AND MORALS,

ANALYTICALLY ARRANGED.

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SECOND EDITION.

Ταυτην με αυτην διδαξον την Ιδεαν τις ποτε εστιν· ινα εις εκεινην αποβλεπων, και χρωμενος αυτη παραδειγματι, ο μεν αν τοιουτον η, ων αν η συ η αλλος τις πραττη, φω οσιον ειναι· ο δ' αν μη τοιουτον, μη φω. PLATO.

Formula quædam constituenda est; quam, si sequemur in comparatione rerum, ab officio nunquam recedemus. CICERO.

"If it be false—if it will not endure the Test—I am as ready to give it up, as I have been to defend it. He must be a poor Philosopher indeed, who, when he sees *Truth* and *System* at variance, can ever be solicitous for the Fate of a System." HARRIS.

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TO

THE ILLUSTRIOUS AUTHOR

OF

THE PURSUITS OF LITERATURE

THE FOLLOWING SKETCH

OF

THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH UNFEIGNED ESTIMATION

OF

HIS MORAL PATRIOTISM,

BY

PARRESIASTES.

Παρρησιαζομενος λαλω.

INTRODUCTORY PROSPECTUS.

" AS when two pilgrims in a forest stray
" Both may be lost, yet each in his own way—
" So fares it with the multitude, beguil'd
" In vain OPINION'S waste and dang'rous wild:
" Ten thousand rove the brakes and thorns among;
" Some eastward, and some westward, and all wrong.
" But here, alas! the fatal diff'rence lies,
" Each man's belief is right in his own eyes;
" And he, that blames what they have blindly chose,
" Incurs resentment for the love he shews."

COWPER.

IT is a Maxim, unexceptionably acceded to, by the best men and the best authors, that great respect is due to the public eye, and, much more, to the public mind. To this principle I most perfectly assent. I shall therefore feel it a moral obligation, not to force myself on their notice, without that deferential introduction they have an unquestionable right to demand: as

no measure of conceit can scarcely surpass, or be more offensive than that, which impels a writer to presume, that he may boldly claim that candid attention, which the most exalted merit should not blush to solicit, from an intelligent community.

Thus much by way of apology, and in order to conciliate that liberal sentence from the perusal of the subsequent strictures, which I am anxious they should receive; especially, as they profess to contain, what either commands the *highest* regard, or else, what may be thrown aside, as a matter of indifference and mere literary amusement. For, in this instance, there is, what seldom occurs, no medium, no other alternative. Either they are the intellectual dream of a misguided imagination, or, they should engage the utmost powers and faculties of the human soul.

The best improvement, I apprehend, that can possibly be made of universal history, is, to consider it as the History of

Reason, Philosophy, Virtue, and *Morals.* In the annals of HUMAN REASON, which we have very accurately inspected, though that faculty has been so often represented as the boasted distinction of our species, nothing has ever been exhibited to us in a more obscure and cloudy medium. Notwithstanding the learning and ingenuity, the time and the talents, which have been devoted to this discussion, it is a fact, that it remains to this hour almost as undefined and equivocal a thing, as it was in the days of the Stagyrite; who is thought to have possessed an acuteness of penetration and argument, which no subtilty can exceed. He seems to have looked down indeed, in all the pride of fancied superiority, upon the rational endowments of his great predecessors, Socrates and Plato. And yet, are we not, even now, with all the advantages accruing from many intervenient centuries, as much in the dark, as to the inherent properties of human Reason, and the extent of its unassisted energies, as if the subject had

never been agitated? A very lively Philosopher, by far too much read and admired, has been, for once, ingenuous enough to confess, that "this same *Reason* "is a very ridiculous thing, and borders "very much upon folly." Even in natural pursuits, or physical inquiries, it is, as another Philosopher, of less brilliancy, but greater sagacity, has expressed it, "Ratio mersa et confusa." And if, in these inferior matters, it be so weak and incompetent, can it be less so, in objects infinitely more sublime? The impartial history of human Reason would not reflect much honour upon human nature*.

* Reid's admirable essays on the intellectual powers of man are an incontestible proof of this. They impressed this idea very powerfully on my mind, as I once travelled through them with close attention. The philosophy of the human mind, as it has been called, is indeed, next to its moral depravity, one of the most humiliating scenes, that has ever been exhibited to the inquiring part of our species. I have compared it, in some solitary hour of amusement, to *a grave harlequin*, with his coat of many colours, playing tricks upon our mental faculties. Thus, some of the philosophers undertake to prove, that there is no such thing as *matter*; others, that there is no such

Little, however, as it seems to have been generally understood, or satisfactorily defined—that there is such a faculty in man is universally admitted. But, so long as the subject is agitated in a way of metaphysical investigation, it is to be feared, that it will remain in its present state of obscurity: not but what one thing is sufficiently clear, and of no trifling importance, that Reason, as a faculty, is indeed the *Cause*, but, in no sense, the *Rule*, of

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thing as *spirit* in man; some, that there is no First intelligent Cause at all; others, that we see every thing in *God*; some talk of "the taleology of nature;" others, of "the cosmological contest into which reason falls with itself!" If all this be not transcendental and chaotic nonsense, what is? It is really astonishing, how the rational intellect can ever be even diverted with such prostitution of time and talents. There is something like wisdom in the writer, who, perfectly competent for the purpose, has had so much moral magnanimity, as to tell the world, that, "Philosophers have hitherto been only *imposing* on themselves and others, by words without meaning." One of their own tribe indeed has discovered, in this enlightened era, that "men are only educated monkies!" and these may be some of *their* monkey pranks.

judgment: or, as the same idea has been better conveyed in another tongue, Quatenus Ratio *facultatem* notat, est CAUSA efficiens proxima perceptionis et judicii; non NORMA. To make the *Faculty*, by which we judge of truth and good, the *Rule* of judgment, has been the fruitful source of those countless absurdities, extravagancies, and contradictions, which have not only bewildered the human intellect, but inverted the whole order of things.

It is not therefore Reason, simply considered, that constitutes the high distinction of man, but; reason properly illuminated: which I suppose to be intended by *right reason*. RECTA RATIO, si de *facultate* agatur, illa est, quæ sufficienti lumine instructa non aliter res concipit, aut de iis judicat, quam revera sunt; et opponitur corruptæ, vitiosæ, cæcæ, quæ frequenter conceptus et judicia format rebus dissona.

In the history of philosophic inquiries, so far, I mean, as they relate, not to physical objects and experiments, but to the supreme concerns of man, we are, if possible, still more embarrassed and perplexed. Those, who are the most celebrated for these disquisitions, are, in points the most interesting and material, the most dissonant: professing, in numerous instances, with an imposing effrontery, to remove our prejudices, to correct our errors, and to enrich our minds with a summary of truth and excellence; with a compendious view of the *decorum*, the *venustum*, and the *honestum*; what have they really done? Have they rendered us, at this period, consummate Masters in the most important of all the sciences? Alas! have they not left us, if we are so weak as to listen to their oracles, wandering in the labyrinths of a miserable Scepticism*? Amidst all this ostenta-

* How can it bear any dispute, whether credulity or scepticism is the more shameful or more dangerous folly? Credulity may be an intellectual weakness, but scepticism

tious parade of correcting our mistakes, enlightening our minds, and reforming our manners, we retire from the schools, both of ancient and modern PHILOSOPHY, not to say any thing of the new system of philosophism, sighing over the vanity, or pitying the illusions, of those, who could only *affect* to be wiser than the rest of their kind.

If there be any one research, which has peculiar attractions for the intellectual powers of man, it is that, which respects the nature and qualities of TRUE VIRTUE: and it is well known to those, who are the most conversant in scientific pursuits, that Genius the most elevated, and Erudition the most comprehensive, have been employed in that honourable exercise. But, here again,

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is a moral evil of the most pernicious consequence, and ought always to be represented as such; as the necessary concomitant of that intemperate love of pleasure, that dereliction of all moral principle, that prostitution of conscience, and that dissoluteness of manners, which are the prominent features and disgrace of the times.

how strangely has the human understanding been bewildered and harassed!

Impatient to have my mind enriched with proper sentiments, and clear ideas, as to the characteristics of true Virtue, I betake myself to this elegant writer; and he informs me, that it consists in a taste for the sublime and beautiful, and in a perfect conformity of our actions with the supreme sense and symmetry of things: but, as all this is perfectly incomprehensible to the million, I am confident there is a fundamental mistake here.

I run to another, less fanciful and elevated, and much more profound, at least, in his mode of reasoning; and he insists, that true Virtue lies in a conformity of our actions with certain eternal and immutable relations and fitnesses of things. But, I am a plain man—no logician—no metaphysician; and I go away still more confounded with undefinable jargon.

I seek to a third; and he assures me, that there is no Virtue, but in the conformity of our actions to truth; in treating every thing, as being what it is. A fourth affirms, that nothing is virtuous, but the proportionable affection of a rational creature to the moral objects of right and wrong; a fifth, that it consists in following nature; a sixth, in avoiding all extremes; and a seventh, to particularize no more, in the voluntary production of the greatest public happiness.

To all these I might have subjoined several more, who have defended their own definitions and views with equal strenuousness and ability. Still, the great question returns, *What is the nature of true Virtue?* and, after having traversed these labyrinths, which is almost as irksome, though not quite so thorny, as to wade through "The Statutes at Large"—how shall we decide amidst this diversity of opinion *?

* "It may be thought no easy task, to determine the preference in favour of one or other of the many different

Some there are, who would impress their favourite sentiments, by assuming an insolent authority and diction: others, by flattering our pride: others, by indulging our selfish passions: others, by all the arts of sophistry: and others, by seducing our imagination. These, however, should only serve to place us the more on our guard, and arm us with greater caution against every dangerous illusion. I foresee no great inconvenience in having revolved a little in the circle of ingenious theory and amusing conjecture, if we fix ultimately in the centre of Truth. He who has wandered through many a path, is most likely to inform us, which is the best *.

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hypotheses of virtue, described by divines and philosophers: but, we may safely affirm, that, if the compass of learning and penetration, which appears in their works, had been employed with a just reference to its *unerring* criterion, or standard, the world would have been furnished with a system of ethics more complete, more easily comprehended, and much better adapted to common use, than any that can be provided by abstract reasoning."

* "The enquiry of truth," said the brightest philosophical ornament of our country, "which is the wooing of it;

No subject, perhaps, has been more carefully reviewed, or more minutely examined, than that of MORALS; nor any, with much greater propriety; whether we consider its dignity, or its use. All the stores of human Literature have been exhausted on this topic. Nevertheless, at the commencement of the nineteenth century from the Christian era, attempts have been made—and made in hours of calm reflection—and by characters the least of all to be excused—to reconcile actions the most disingenuous and dishonourable, with principles the most pure and uncorrupt! We have had moral philosophers avowedly infidel, and professionally the reverse, pouring equal contempt upon the

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the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it; and the belief of the truth, which is the enjoying of it; is the sovereign good of human nature." BACON'S ESSAYS.

Is it not painful then to know, that, "The road to moral truth has been left in such a plight by some modern projectors, commonly called philosophers, that a man of honesty and plain sense must either, with great labour and loss of time, delve his way through, or be swallowed up in a quagmire?"

wisdom and maxims of Heaven, as set before us in the example and doctrine of THE MESSIAH!

The case is, we compile an heterogeneous jumble of theses, collected from systems of jurisprudence, and blend them with political constitutions, jesuitical casuistry, and private interest; and then honour them with the title of *Moral philosophy*; to the utter exclusion of that simple, unsophisticated, luminous, and complete code of universal legislation, digested for us in the sacred word of purity and truth: whose ethical institutes were, no doubt, intended to form that first of all great characters—before which, heroes, nobles, and statesmen, may hide their diminished heads—"AN HONEST MAN, "the noblest work of God."

Impressed, in an early stage of my literary education, with the importance of distinct ideas, as the best method both of receiving, and of communicating science,

it has always appeared to me, as scarcely possible to do either, unaided by the accurate definition of principal terms. Upon this account, I judge it expedient to state, that, by *Reason*, I would be understood to mean, those principles, which are best calculated to enlighten, correct, and regulate, that faculty in man: by *Philosophy*, the love of wisdom—properly so called: by *Virtue*, the intellectual beauty, worth, and excellence of the human soul: and, by *Morality*, the harmony of the life and manners, with the best principles of Reason, Virtue, and Philosophy, thus briefly defined.

The very strange, perplexing, and metaphysical mode, in which these things have been too frequently represented, may serve to remind us of Aristotle's definition of *Light*; which can only tend to plunge us into mental darkness: "Light," says he, "generates its luminous species by way of multiplication; and this action is called, repercussion—and, conformable to the acting force, there is another multi-

plication, which is equivocal, and by which light begets heat, and heat putrefaction!"—Of how much greater importance is it for us to know, that, whether in the world of Nature, of Reason, or of Revelation, "whatsoever maketh manifest," φανερουμενον, *apparent*, "is Light."—To offer to instruct mankind, by a style, or in a mode of reasoning, which is only comprehensible by five in a hundred, is to insult the public understanding. I venerate the memory of that *truly great mind*, which could say, Sunt, qui scire volunt, eo fine tantum, ut *sciant:* hæc turpis est Curiositas. Sunt, ut ipsi *sciantur:* turpis Vanitas. Sunt, ut scientiam pro pecunia vendant, pro honoribus: turpis Quæstus. Sunt, ut ædificent: hæc est *Charitas* et *Beneficentia.*

Of the prodigious aversion, which some writers have betrayed to the use of *System*, in certain cases, I need not be apprized. To their opinion, however, I am very far from being any convert. "For, what is

System, but *a whole*, exhibited with a due consistency, or agreement, of all its parts? And, if this be the only just sense of the word, can there be any Art or Science, any general truth made up of particulars, without it? What is a System, but a body of science, in which all the constituent branches are suitably arranged and properly connected, so that the whole may be conveyed in one perspicuous view? The *lucidus ordo* of any given science must inevitably produce a system: and, however his pretensions may differ, he must be an enemy to the former, who would destroy the latter.

"There is, then, a concatenation, an harmony, a connection, in the truths of Religion. There is a System, or complete body of Doctrine, in the Gospel. But a Religion, in which there is such a golden chain, ought not to be taken by bits and parts. The more ingenuity there is in a machine composed of divers wheels, the more necessary it is, to consi-

der it *in its whole*, and in all its arrangements, and the more does its beauty escape our observation, when we confine our attention to a single wheel. In a compact System—in a coherent body of Doctrine, there is nothing useless; nothing, which ought not to occupy *the very place*, that the Genius, who composed the whole, hath given it." This, indeed, is what constitutes the *Perfection* of Christian knowledge. There is an *Integrity* in Science, as well as in morals.

Not at all shy of meeting any idea of exception, which may arise in the mind of my readers, I can easily anticipate, that some of them may arraign the very *Title*, I have selected, as confident and presumptuous: and, I should readily allow the justice of the charge, if this *Temple of Truth* be *not* erected upon that basis, which the divine Architect himself has laid in his own oracles of Inspiration. In that case, let it sink into utter ruin, nor leave one trace behind. My own hand should be

the first to crumble it into atoms. But, if it be reared on the foundation of sacred Verity, not all the powers and malice of Infidelity itself shall be able to overthrow it. To that Criterion it is submitted; and, persuaded, as I am, it will pass that ordeal, I do not hesitate to affirm, that it must contain the very *best scheme* of *Reason*, *Philosophy*, *Virtue*, and *Morals*, that can be proposed.* Each of these topics may perhaps have been recommended with greater erudition, and with more acute argument, in larger works. If so, some merit may be adjudged me, for having reduced them to this compendium, and to a style of more popular, or less abstruse, simplicity. Is it not of greater consequence, that the many should be informed, than that the few should be amused?

* When the great Sir Isaac Newton had delivered an opinion, which any one choose to controvert, he never was at the pains to defend it, but contented himself with saying, "I believe, Sir, if you will be at the trouble of examining my opinion, you will find I have very good reasons for it."

After having fled, with an eagerness of curiosity, and pryed, with a diligence of inquisition, I cannot describe, into every thing that has fallen in my way, for an uninterrupted series of years, on each of these subjects, I have found no refuge from the intellectual confusion and distraction, in which they have involved me, but in "THE ORACLES OF GOD": which I now consult, as the *only* oracles of Reason, Philosophy, Virtue, and Morals, in which an Immortal can either repose or confide.

Here, then, it might naturally be expected, that something should be presented in defence and confirmation of their divine original. But, have you ever applied, for all the requisite intelligence on that desideratum, to the valuable writings of Abbadie—Butler—Leslie—Beattie—Paley—Doddridge—Hartley—Watson—and many others? Have you *seriously* considered the truth of the Scrip-

tures, and their divine authority, by inquiring fairly into the genuineness of those Scriptures; into the principal facts they contain; into the manner in which they have been handed down to us; into the great importance of their matter and subject; into the surprising peculiarity of their style and language; into their agreement with universal history; into their perfect harmony with themselves; into their numerous and wonderful prophecies; into their miracles, no less numerous and wonderful; into the moral character of Moses, and the prophets, of Christ, and his apostles; and into the amazing propagation of the Christian faith, within the three first centuries? Have you really digested all these particulars with an *impartial, virtuous*, and *persevering* examination? And, can you still remain an Infidel? If so, you demand more and greater evidence than satisfied the capacious intellect of a Bacon, a Newton, a Locke, a Pascal, an Addison, a Grotius, a Selden, and a Boyle!

Into what a pitiable state of degradation and depravity must their minds have sunk, who can prefer the mischievous eruptions, which are thrown out by such volcanos, as a Bolingbroke, a Shaftsbury, a Chesterfield, a Paine, or a Volney, to that blaze of mind and excellence, which issues from this brilliant constellation * !

It is, indeed, to no purpose, as we have witnessed in numberless instances, that a complication of evidence is shining around

* "Though I am persuaded, that the essential doctrines of Christianity, considered in themselves, may be sufficient to prove their divine origin and inspiration, yet, when I contemplate the beautiful simplicity, with which they are delivered, and the amazing success with which they were propagated—and when I compare these two circumstances with the *character*, the *means*, and the *abilities*, of the persons, who published them to the world, I see then, indeed, the strongest presumptions in favour of their truth; and I pray God to forgive the *wilful ignorance*, and *corrupt disingenuity* of those, who pretend to believe, that twelve obscure, insignificant, illiterate men—without power, interest, opulence, or learning—could vanquish the prejudices of the world, triumph over the power of custom and education, and expose themselves to death in its most dreadful forms, in the service of an Impostor!"

us, if a man be resolved to bury himself in the deep, dark, dismal caverns of pertinacious Infidelity. The credimus, quod volumus, is alike applicable to our faith, and to our unbelief: and in vain are the most cogent, and, to ingenuous spirits, irresistible appeals addressed to our *understanding*, in any case, where the *heart* is disaffected. The clouds of mental error, and the shades of intellectual darkness, are rarely dissipated *against* our inclination; though, into candid, modest, and unpresuming inquirers, Truth is ever ready to emit her enlightening beams, and, in their sincere researches, to transport them with her beauty and glory. Nothing can have a greater tendency to eclipse them both from our sight, than the indulgence of any vicious propensity; and, especially, of that reasoning pride, which human vanity is too apt to cherish, and sometimes is so infatuated as to defend, with all the arts of sophistry and eloquence.

Among the peculiars of modern eccentricity, and the numerous obligations we

are under to the *Philosophism* of the age, there is one maxim, which is calculated to damp all the noblest exertions of the human intellect—to check the current of honest inquiry, at once—and to encourage the baneful exercises of infidelity in every possible direction and extent. The maxim, I mean, is, "The innocence of error." For, if error be innocent, the research of truth is scarcely worth the pursuit.

What then! instead of cultivating that mental dignity, and soaring into those regions of discovery, for which we were formed, are we so groveling, as to think it harmless to deviate into the wilds of mistake and delusion, though surrounded with the means of light and knowledge? Can we deem it *innocent*, to indulge any false conceptions of the nature, perfections, and will, of the divine Being, or of religion, of virtue, and of morals, when the richest sources of the most correct information are put into our hands? Far be it from us

to relax and paralyze all our intellectual faculties, either by reposing in the castle of indolence and apathy; or, by rioting in the depravities of sense and appetite; or, by the adoption of a principle so fatal to those investigations, which are among the most pure and refined distinctions of the human kind*. Truth is a treasure of

* "Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in Charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of TRUTH. It is a pleasure, to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed on the sea: a pleasure, to stand at the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof, below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing on the vantage-ground of *Truth*, and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests of the vale beneath; so always, that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling, or pride."

BACON'S ESSAYS.

I perfectly agree with a philosophical writer, whom I cannot always approve, when he says, "A careful observation of *Truth*, the way to *Happiness*, and the practice of *Reason*, are in the issue the same thing. For, of the two last, each falls in with the first; and, therefore, each with other. They are all in the same interest, and conspire to advance and perfect human nature: and the best definition which can be given of Religion is, that it is *The pursuit of Happiness, by the practice of Truth and Reason.*"

such value, that it cannot be purchased at too dear a rate; and the words of a very ancient philosopher would be no dishonour to more enlightened times than those, in which he flourished:— *Χαιρειν ἀν εασας τας Τιμας τας των πολλων ανθρωπων, την ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑΝ σκοπων, πειρασομαι τω οντι ως αν δυνωμαι βελτιςος ων κ᾽ ζην, κ᾽ επειδαν αποθνησκω, αποθνησκειν.* "Wherefore, bidding farewel to the honours of the multitude, and having my eye upon TRUTH, I will really endeavour, as far as I am able, to live in the best manner I can; and when I die, to die so."

But, without enlarging unnecessarily on a maxim, which is fraught with infinite mischief, and which therefore ought never to be noticed, but to be exposed, if Truth, whether in the mind, or in the expression, be the conception and the representation of *things as they really are*, a man must be lost either to good sense, or to rational consideration, who will be an avowed advocate for the innocence of conceiving or

of representing things, *as they are not.* A Child, an Idiot, or a Maniac, might be allowed such wretched imbecility; but, in any higher character, it ought only to provoke our contempt. Effectually to subvert this poisonous maxim, let us strive to establish that of the Grecian sage, Ορθον η Αληθει' αει. "Truth is always right." If so, Error is always wrong.

"None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
"Whose hand is feeble, or *his aim untrue.*
"For though, ere yet the shaft is on the wing,
"Or when it first forsakes th' elastic string,
"It *err but little* from th' intended line,
"It falls, at last, far wide of his design*."

From that principle of Benevolence, by which we ought to be universally actuated,

* Is it not surprising, that the advocates for the harmlessness of error should be so lost to common sense, and so destitute of good sense, as not to have discovered, what is so very obvious to the meanest capacity? Having taken but one false step out of the way of truth, every additional step we take must remove us the farther from it. "For, when the mind, that compleat machine, has its first wheel set wrong, which gives movement to every other, though all the rest go right, the whole will terminate in wrong."

I have felt much secret concern in observing, of late, how many persons, whose literary endowments may be justly ranged in the highest class, have perverted them in the service of the Maxim, I have here presumed to hold up to public detestation. I should think myself entitled to far greater applause, from minds the most estimable, for employing my glimmering taper in conducting one modest inquirer into *The temple of truth*, than in displaying their splendid torch, to mislead unwary admirers into the devious mazes of scepticism, or error. Let the vanity of others be gratified, in advancing sophism; let ours be the more honourable and easy labour, of promoting and embracing truth. *The whole World ought to be the Temple of truth.*

To the adoption of this maxim, however, incontestible as it is, and so very superior to that I have just dismissed, there are, it is to be feared, two almost insurmountable barriers—Passion, and Preju-

dice. To contend with the former, is a more than herculean labour, in which I dare not engage; and, to diminish the universal influence of the latter, is no facile task. How numerous are the minds, too chaste and temperate not to be always proof against the enchantments of the circæan cup, who will, nevertheless, suffer themselves to be led captive by this usurping tyrant! who will sacrifice even Truth itself, though adorned with all the graces of faith, and hope, and charity, for the sake of paying their more willing obedience to her stubborn foe! The man, whose judgment is really emancipated from all unjustifiable prepossession, is perhaps one of the greatest curiosities, and certainly one of the noblest characters, of every age. Rara avis *!

* " The writers on Logic, whose province it is, to direct and assist mankind in the exercise of their intellectual powers, have contributed, in too many instances, to mislead them. Sufficient care has not been taken to guard the mind against indolence, inattention, inaccuracy of observation, precipitancy of judgment, and that variety of deceptions, which arise from prepossession, passion, and

"Prejudice," says one, "is that to the mind, which dust is to the sight; it both hurts the organ and disguises the object. Its narrow breast, shrivelled and confined, leaves no room for the noble parts to dilate and play. I do not know, whether it is placed by any Moralist in the catalogue of vices; but, I am sure, it is a vice, and productive of many more. It is a declared enemy to truth, and to the freedom of ingenuous inquiry; to the right of private judgment, and to detachments from party. But, though irrational in itself, uncomfortable to those who encourage it, and pernicious in its effects, so imperceptibly does it steal upon us, so completely does it establish its throne within us, and so entirely does it govern us, that, to reason with Prejudice, is just as available, as to hold a lamp to the blind. It hates argument, be-

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the innumerable biasses, to which humanity is subject. The main design with them is, to form an acute reasoner, and able disputant, with little regard to that more useful acquisition and valuable accomplishment, *The love of truth.*" This is that moral Logic, if I may so express it, which ought never to be separated from Logic intellectual,

cause it dreads conviction." To remove prejudice, would be making great progress towards the destruction of error, and the triumph of truth.

If I have not essayed to support *this Temple* with the pillar of human Authorities, it is not, because there are not many to whose exalted genius and talents I most cheerfully bow with deference and respect: but, if what I submit be not sanctioned by much higher Authority, let it perish in deserved oblivion: if it be, the Sun needs no satellites: and human authorities, after all, prove nothing, except it be, that great men, as to earthly science, are not always wise in that, which it most concerns them to understand*. The Lux evangelica is the light and guide, I implicitly follow, through all the darkness of benighted reason, false philosophy, counterfeit virtue,

* Who is there, that is not well read enough to know, that authorities, equally ingenious and learned, full of the most laborious trains of reasoning, may be adduced for twenty systems of opinions, various, opposite, and contradictory?

and fictitious morals. I have weighed them all in a just Balance, and offer the result to public inspection. Should the Learned frown upon it with disdain, there may be those of my own intellectual standard, who will secretly smile their approval: they may deplore the insufficiency of the powers employed in so arduous an undertaking, but they will accept the goodness of the intent.

I have taken a prospective view of every thing that can await me in this bold attack on that self-satisfaction, that vain conceit, and those stubborn prejudices, with which the comprehensive nature of my subject obliges me to combat: and my courage would certainly have failed me in the encounter, were I not deeply impressed with the idea, that the Cause is worthy the contest; and that, though

" The works of man inherit, as is just,
" Their Author's frailty, and return to dust;
" Yet TRUTH DIVINE for ever stands secure,
" Its head is guarded, as its base is sure.

" First, in the rolling flood of endless years,
" The pillar of TH' ETERNAL PLAN appears;
" The roaring storm and dashing wave defies,
" Built by that Architect, who built the skies."

There is nothing indeed so much to be dreaded, as the merciless tomahawk of those *modest* and *humble* characters, who will fly, like vultures, at the four first *Assertions* of the following Synopsis, and pay no more attention to those which succeed, than if they were not essential branches of it! Such is their excessive attachment to their own ideas of practical goodness, that they can pass over all the pitiful minutiæ, which appertain to integrity and honour! Such too were the Pharisees of other times. Happy had it been for our Religion, had they left no imitators, who tread too closely in their self-opinioned steps.

As a private Individual, in search of Truth and Good; as an obscure Scribbler, too insignificant to excite envy or jealousy, and desirous to remain so; conscious, too, of that deficiency, which must not presume

to think of being enrolled among the heroes of literary renown, and yet, ambitious of rendering some service to his generation; let me once more deprecate that unamiable apathy to the sensibilities of others, that malignity of abuse, by which many a brighter glow-worm has been crushed. For, I affect not to illuminate those, who are already enlightend, but only to shine in a dark place: and many such places, I know, there are in this unrivalled nation. And, if so, however the nicety of fastidious Criticism may be irritated, will not the spirit of public Benevolence approve such a sentiment as this? "I would rather incur the censure of being tedious and dull, so that I was thoroughly intelligible, than, by aiming at elegance, to sacrifice perspicuity at the shrine of conciseness*." As I covet no

* "A certain brilliancy of thought, and prettiness of style, might be fit enough to surprise and delight the mind with transient glimpses of truth; but is by no means adapted to convey that full and permanent conviction, which is due to truths of the first rank. The mind must be allowed to judge of them with impartiality and cool-

plaudits, let me flatter myself, that no illiberality of heart will ascribe to me either Principles, or Designs, at the farthest distance from those I avow. Of this, however, I have some apprehensions; for, I have seen enough of this strange world, to know, that, "under all possible circumstances, every man has his enemies; and those, who wish to injure, never want protectors."

As an Apology to those, who might otherwise expect to meet with something like Oratory, or Pathos, in these pages, I shall interpose a few remarks from a su-

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ness, proceeding, not upon sentiments suddenly raised by striking views of truth, but on a deliberate judgment, formed by a familiar acquaintance with the object: and, in order thereto, the same truths must be presented again and again, with no great variation, and with as little adventitious ornament as possible. This manner of treating a subject may indeed disappoint us of the attention of some, whose assent and approbation we should otherwise value: but, we trust the merits of the cause to those, who can with patience and pleasure entertain themselves with the steady view of obvious and interesting Truth."

perior writer. "There is," says he, "one kind of address to the Understanding, and only one, which disdains all assistance whatever from Fancy. The address, I mean, is mathematical Demonstration; the perfection of which, in point of elegance, consists in Perspicuity: and perspicuity here results entirely from propriety and simplicity of Diction, and from accuracy of Method; where the mind is regularly conducted forwards in the same track, the attention no way diverted, nor one unnecessary word or idea introduced.

"Is not this equally applicable to logical Demonstration? When a Speaker addresses himself to the Understanding and rational Faculties of his hearers, he proposes their *Instruction*, either by explaining some doctrine, unknown, or not distinctly comprehended by them; or, by proving some position, disbelieved, or doubted by them. In other words, he proposes either to dispel ignorance, or to vanquish error. In the one, his aim is

their *Information*; in the other, their *Conviction*. Accordingly, the predominant quality of the former is, *Perspicuity*; of the latter, *Argument*. By that, we are made to know; by this, to believe*.

"Be it recollected, then, that pure Logic regards only the subject; which is examined solely for the sake of Information. *Truth*, as such, is the proper aim of the examiner; who must lay aside, as it were, in this research, his Imagination and his Passions, for the more impartial and unbiassed exercise of his Reason and Judgment. And, to this end, in all explanatory discussions, there is a certain preciseness of manner, which ought to pervade the whole, and which, though not in the form of argument, is not the less satisfactory, since it carries internal Evidence along with it."

* The writer is nevertheless attached to what has been called, "that noble Enthusiasm for Religion, without which, Reason has no Guide, Imagination no Object; without which, in fine, Virtue herself is without charms, and Sensibility without a source."

There may indeed be moments, in which I may betray a degree of warmth, inconsistent with that cool Demonstration for which I plead. That, I beg, may be attributed to my not giving any credit to *the innocence of Error*. All Error, in my judgment, has a direct tendency to Vice and Misery; and all Truth, to Virtue and Good. In proportion to the Loveliness of the latter, must be the Odiousness of the former: and, to use the words of a sagacious Moralist, "it must be owned that, in most countries, a considerable part of what is called Religion deserves no other name than that of *Absurdity made sacred*: but, it were strange indeed, should *false* Religion produce that uprightness of Heart, that perfection of Morals, which is the genuine effect of *Truth*."

It is anticipated, that the Sentiments here enforced will have to combat, not only with the most surprising Ignorance and multiform Error, but with "Prejudice the most inveterate; arising both from

contrary Sentiments early imbibed, and from an excessive deference to Names and Authorities. In that case, however, the simplest way, and generally that which best promotes the discovery of *Truth*, is, to give as distinct and methodical a delineation as possible of one's own ideas, together with the grounds on which they are supported, and then to leave the impartial Reader to judge for himself."

Not that these occasional Strictures on the inutility of Eloquence in matters of logical Demonstration, or in the establishment of Truth, have any design to lessen the value of elegant composition in our esteem. In their proper place, let the Harmony of numbers, the Luxuriance of fancy, and the Energy of expression, be cultivated to the utmost extent: only let them observe their proper place; especially in their application to sacred Verity; lest they unhappily expose the cause they affect to serve; of which the examples are sufficiently numerous. For, without as-

suming the insolent air of imposing an opinion, were I permitted the privilege of giving one, I should not hesitate to affirm, that TRUTH is Eloquence, as well as Reason and Philosophy, in whatever garb she may appear.

Incalculable is the mischief, which the Christian Cause has suffered, by our deviation from a maxim, from which there should be no departure; that, *sacred Truth must always be viewed in its own light**. If you bring it before the light of what has been called Reason and Philosophy, the medium through which it is surveyed is a false one; and the beautiful and illustrious object becomes immediately disfigured and deformed. It is no longer *itself*.

* Its divine simplicity has been so much disfigured of late by severe, fastidious, and perverting Criticism, that, if this mode of process against it be not arrested, original Christianity will, in a short period, be entirely unknown. It were no difficult undertaking to demonstrate this from most of our modern publications on the subject; in which all its principal features are either totally effaced, or wretchedly disguised.

Thus, the character of one, who has been handed down to us as a philosopher almost divine, when presented to a lewd multitude, by the scandalous buffoonery, or wit, of an Aristophanes, was rendered contemptible: even Wisdom was mistaken for Folly; and Virtue, for Vice. We should say to sacred Truth, what Agrippa, when personating the sublime character of *Justice*, once said, with unaffected dignity and grace, to St. Paul, "Thou art permitted to speak for thyself." An indulgence she is very seldom granted *.

I beg leave to submit it too, to minds of calm and unbiassed consideration, who have the success of our Religion seriously

* Should the question be, An Rationis in investigando Scripturæ sensu magnus usus sit? It must be replied, Ratio humana, si pro Facultate sumatur, uti nunc sunt homines, in nemine mortalium *recta*, sed multùm cæca, vitiosa, et ad errorem proclivis est; sic ut facilius plerumque malè quam benè arbitretur. Maximè ea Rationis nostræ corruptio se ostendit circa res divinas; circa quas est cæca, 2 Cor. iv. 4. *obscurata*, Eph. iv. 18. *tenebræ*, Eph. v. 8. ου δυναται γνωναι, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Imo et ανοητος est, Tit. iii. 3. et ασυνετος. Rom. i. 21, 22. 1 Cor. 8. 19, 20. et ii, 8.

at heart, whether the same cause has not received material injury from not having been exhibited to the world *in its own Language*. It should seem, by the general neglect of it, as if the phraseology of the inspired writings were not the fittest dress, in which they ought to appear; that the noble Simplicity, adopted by the great Founder of our Faith, and, after his example, by the Apostles, had long since ceased to be one of its most amiable characteristics: that a Style, once celebrated for its god-like Benevolence, as the most accommodated to the capacities of all mankind, was become odious, and disgusting, to modern refinement: and that, banished, by fastidious, not to say, profane Critics, from the regions of classic Literature, it had become offensive to our Divines themselves *.

If otherwise, why substitute those pretty Conceits, those affected Terms, those me-

* I am not extremely captivated myself either with the *Piety*, or the *Modesty*, of some modern scribblers, who have dared to call this *sacred Simplicity*, by the dishonouring terms of *Inaccuracy*, and *Carelessness!* Job, xiii. 4, 5.

retricious Ornaments, and all that tinsel finery of Diction, by which Ignorance and Impiety alone can ever be dazzled, and gratified, for the simple strains of that infallible Teacher, who came down from Heaven? or presume, that we can improve upon his peculiar and dicriminative mode of instruction? Why not "condescend with him to those of low estate?" * If it were among the glories of his exalted Character, that he "preached the Gospel to *the Poor*," was it less so, that he preached it in a simplicity of manner, which they

* My appeal here, is evidently to those, both in a way of Argumentum ad hominem, et ad verecundiam, who admit the grounds upon which I argue. To those, who reject the Christian Revelation, "I am beating the air."

If it be true, that, the Style, the Language, and the Manner of writing, made use of in the books of the Old and New Testament, may be classed among the various proofs of their genuineness, they ought to be preserved, upon that principle, with a kind of moral delicacy. "Words, that are too *fine*, too *learned*, too *modern*, are repugnant to the sytle of the sacred Penmen; which, instead of being flowery, or affected, is eminently *natural*, and *simple*, and *dignified*. And on the other hand, words that are *low* and *vulgar*, are still more derogatory from the exalted sublimity of the subjects contained in holy Scripture."

could understand? Who would not emulate the benevolence of that Man, who, with every possible advantage to acquire literary Fame, had he been governed by so mean a passion, could say, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all: yet, in the Church, I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may by my voice teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown Tongue?" And a Style may be so elaborately refined, metaphorical, or sublime, as to be as unintelligible to the majority, as a foreign language *.

* A remark of Locke's on this subject deserves attention. "In all discourses, that pretend to inform or instruct, figurative speeches, and allusion in language, should be wholly avoided; and, when Truth and Knowledge are concerned, cannot but be thought a great fault, either of the language, or of the person, who makes use of them. It is evident indeed, how much men love to deceive, and be deceived, since Rhetoric, that powerful instrument of error, and deceit, has its established professors, is publicly taught, and has always been had in great reputation: and, I doubt not, but it will be thought great boldness, if not brutality in me, to have said so much against it: and it is in vain to find fault with those arts of deceiving, wherein men find pleasure to be deceived."

Let us renounce then these comparative puerilities, and return to those better days, when, impressed with the Dignity, and Importance, of the eternal Verity, they did not disdain to instruct *the mere Vulgar*, as they have been reproachfully called; and, when all the Graces, Harmony, and Copiousness of Style, with every various species of Composition, were sacrificed to general Utility. For, diminutive as the subject may be deemed, by the unreflecting, it enters much more deeply, than might be imagined, into the grand scale of right Reason, sound Philosophy, true Virtue, and Christian Moral. For, ought we not to know, that REVELATION is an Address, not to Cities, Cottages, Courts, or Camps only, but to the vast bulk of mankind? and that, it proposes itself to us, as constituting the most essential branch of the welfare and perfection of the human species? And this it is, which renders all practical inattention to it without excuse.

Many, I know, will urge, as some plea for such inattention, the difficulty of un-

derstanding the Word of Inspiration: and this idea has been too much encouraged, by those, who ought to have resisted it, as public Teachers, totis viribus. For their sakes, however, I have reduced all the Fundamentals of Christianity to a few simple Propositions. Those propositions, I consider as Principles. And those principles, I apprehend, may be laid down as so many Canons, or Axioms, by which to direct us safely through all the apparent obscurities of this marvellous Book. Supposing then, THE ASSERTIONS, I have arranged in dialectic order, to be indeed sanctioned by infallible Testimony, the Faculty of perceiving their truth, and excellency, and of making such inferences as are agreeble to them, is, what I should denominate *right Reason.*

I cannot express the pleasure, I feel, in taking the following extract from one of our public Reviews. Such Sentiments do the parties great honour, and, from their extensive circulation, may be of essential

service to thousands. "The Writers, whose labours most interest society, are those, who have employed themselves on subjects of Religion. Religion is of equal and unquestionable moment to all. On Religion, and on religious opinions, depend in no common degree the *tranquillity*—the *prosperity*—and the *happiness*, of a State."

They then add—"The holy Scriptures are the Guides of life; the Cloud by day, and the Pillar of fire by night. Those therefore, who undertake to illustrate them, enter upon a task, in the execution of which we are all concerned. Their competence and their motives are questions of universal consideration. Such has been the zeal of Infidelity—so various have been the forms, which it has of late assumed, that we have had an explanation of the Bible from the pen of one, whose greatest satisfaction seems to have been, to obscure its Truth, to corrupt its Purity, and to destroy its Influence! To the Commen-

tator of the sacred writings we may say, " be thy intents wicked," thou mayest rob us of our best hopes, of our richest comforts: " be they charitable," thou mayest increase our Knowledge—animate our Virtue—and smooth the road to eternal Life."—O! si sic omnia!

To preclude, if possible, the idea of my obtruding these Sentiments on the public notice, either as a mere Disputant, or as an idle Controversialist, I here profess, that, however mistaken I may be, in the Plan I have formed, or in the Method, I have pursued, to gain an object so ardently to be desired, I submit them, with the sole design to promote *the best Happiness of Man*—in relation to the Sum of his Existence; not, as limited by the narrow horizon of this life—but, as extending to the boundless ocean of Eternity.

" Happiness"—says the Epicurean, and the Voluptuary—" is that of the *Senses*. We were born for their utmost gratifica-

tion, and there terminates all human Felicity."—Thy Fellow-commoners of the Stall may be of the same opinion. My Ambition is, not to sink—but, to soar. I deny not, however, that these organic Powers have their respective delights; and that, in a corrected and innocent degree, they may be considered as so many secondary Sources of Pleasure. But, to argue with a person, who would degrade himself so far beneath a Rational, as to contend, that we were born for no higher enjoyments than these, would be, to argue with determined Infatuation, pitiable Derangement, or loathsome Brutality *.

I admit too, that the *Imagination* is capable of forming to itself a thousand additional Pleasures of a higher kind—

* The genuine Happiness of our being must be something, that is not incompatible with, or destructive of, its nature—or of the superior and better part of it. Εν παντι δε μαλιστα φυλακτεον το ηδυ, και την ηδονην· ϗ γαρ αδεκαστοι κρινομεν αυτην. "In every thing, we should take great care, as to the pleasure of it; for, we are very apt to have our judgment corrupted by pleasure."

resulting from an acquired artificial Taste, the fine Arts, together with many other, though needless, yet fascinating Elegancies, and Delicacies, of polished Life.

To these again, we may add the pure and elevated Pleasures, which flow from acquisitions of *Science*; from cultivating all the amiable and benevolent Affections; and from the many nameless charms of social Intercourse, and domestic Endearment.

Prepared, however, as I am, to acknowledge, and to celebrate, in their just proportion, all these Sources of terrestrial Satisfaction—I have long excluded from my own mind every other idea of supreme Happiness, but that, of *Reason*, *Philosophy*, *Virtue*, and *Morals*, rectified, sublimed, and perfected, by

DIVINE REVELATION*.

* *Happiness*, I would be understood to intimate, should be a term, *consecrated* entirely to these pursuits, according

As to the reference, which I suppose these things to bear to each other—that, I have attempted to state, with the utmost perspicuity, to general Inspection, in the succeedent leaves. In the examination of which, but a single Favour is fervently requested of the unprejudiced Reader; that he will place before him the sacred Volume, to which they constantly appeal—

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to the Definitions already and hereafter submitted; and not applied to every trivial and fleeting circumstance of gratification. Mankind should be instructed, I humbly conceive, to treat it in this serious and important light. To be pleased, is one thing; to be happy, is another. But, there is no necessary connexion between *Pleasure* and *Happiness*. The eager pursuit of the former is, in more than ten thousand instances, the total destruction of the latter: nor are any terms either more, or more fatally, perverted and abused than these. If, among the numerous advantages to be derived from a divine Revelation, it does not expose every imaginary and delusive scheme of happiness, and point out to us in the fullest manner the only true sources of pleasure, it would scarce deserve our attention, much less our gratitude: but, Sacred Science, evangelical Goodness, and solid Bliss, are as inseparably connected by the Constitution of Heaven, as Faith, Hope, and Charity, are, in the Christian Character.

and then determine for himself, regardless of all human Authorities, whether or no these are "The true sayings of God."

Though I disclaim all partiality for any human opinions, I do not profess that Independency of Principle, which, I perceive, is becoming a fashionable term of disguise, for Sentiments, against which we should be continually guarded. Historic evidence has warned us of their tendency, in characters, too large, and too legible, for every thing but wilful blindness. They are calculated only to subvert the noblest culture of the human Mind. I avow, therefore, my unreserved attachment to what I conceive to be "The Oracles of God *."

* In the following remarks, I quote the language of a Philosopher, whose fine sense, solid understanding, and amiable mind, have been acknowledged by all parties, however differing in opinion——

"The Evidence for the Christian Religion seems to be so clear and strong, that no person, who is previously qualified by Benevolence, Piety, and the moral Sense, can refuse his assent to it. But, if the Christian Religion

As to the *Motives*, by which I have been incited in this Publication, if they be not the most pure, and disinterested—if I have not been governed by the Spirit of the divine Law, the sublime impulse of universal Benevolence—I am perfectly deceived in the operations of my own Heart; and that too, in a Retreat of solitude and silence, where I have had the greatest opportunities of knowing them. If the

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be true, it must be of great Importance; and, if of great importance, it is a duty of natural Religion to inquire into it. He, who determines it as of no importance, determines, at once, that it is false. But, it is too evident to all impartial observers, that those, who disbelieve, or affect to disbelieve, have not made a serious accurate inquiry; such a one, as they would make about a worldly concern of moment; but content themselves, and endeavour to perplex others, with general objections, mixed, for the most part, with ridicule, and raillery;—things, that are manifest hinderances in the search after Truth: and, it may be of some use, to observe, that, notwithstanding the great prevalence of Infidelity in the present times, it is seldom found to consist with an accurate knowledge of History, sacred and profane, and *never* with an exalted piety and devotion to God. Should any Unbeliever think this censure too severe, let him examine his own Heart." HARTLEY.

Themes, at which I glance, are not of the highest concern to each Individual of every distinct class in the Community, from the Prince to the Peasant—I am utterly mistaken. And, if the *Ratio sacra* be not the *Ratio recta*, the Temple, I have been labouring to erect, must of course vanish into an "airy nothing." But, if my motives be estimable; my objects, the supreme excellence and felicity of Man; and the Basis of my argument indeed divine; the severity of Criticism, it is hoped, will be softened to a liberal tone, and the research of the impartial Inquirer may be in some degree gratified. For the moral Success of this well-intentioned Effort, I must look to a higher Quarter. Εγω εφυτευσα, Απολλως εποτισεν· αλλ' ο Θεος ηυξανεν. Ωςε ὑτε ο φυτευων εςι τι, ὑτε ο ποτιζων, αλλ' ο αυξανων Θεος. 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.

For me, proceeding, as I certainly must, in every step I advance, with the most humiliating consciousness of my own deficiencies—led, I would yet trust, by celestial guidance, in the Attempt I shall

now make to draw a correct miniature of the Christian Edifice——

" Still may I note, how all th' agreeing parts
" Of this well-order'd Fabric join to frame
" One fair, one finish'd, one harmonious Whole:
" Trace the close links, which form the golden Chain,
" In beautiful connexion: mark the Scale
" Whose nice gradations, with progression true,
" For ever rising, end in DEITY."

And now, after having sat, for no inconsiderable period, at the feet of many a rational, philosophical, virtuous, and moral Instructor, and listened, with patient perseverance, to their various Systems; after having exerted my utmost pains, to " divest myself of all unjustifiable *Prejudices*; to observe the influence and extent of *Axioms*; and to examine the nature and force of *Consequences*;" allow me the privilege, and honour, of introducing you, adorned with the spirit of ingenuous Candour, not indeed to the mythological mysteries of an Egyptian Grove, a Persian Cell, or an Indian Pagoda, but, into what I have dared to call

THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH.

A

SYNOPSIS

OF

THE PRINCIPLES,

ON WHICH THE FOLLOWING EDIFICE IS CONSTRUCTED. *

I.

GOD alone is *the first Cause, the chief Good,* and *the last End,* of all things.

* Some Philosophers have defined Science, or Intelligence, to be *the Knowledge of Principles:* and, questionless, the Knowledge of first Principles is essential to the right understanding and judgment of Truth, Virtue, and Happiness.

These Principles are variously denominated: sometimes they are called *Maxims*, Maxima, or the chief things in any Science; sometimes, *Axioms*, from ἀξιος, things most worthy to be regarded, in that attainment; sometimes, *Aphorisms*, from ἀφορίζω, things determined on, and settled; sometimes *Principles*, or fundamental Preliminaries: and, it should be carefully observed, that, All the Principles of divine Revelation are *Theorems*, or infallible Truths; because, Θεῦ τα ῥηματα. "Ουτοι οι λογοι ἀληθινοι εισι τῦ Θεῦ."

This seems to be the proper idea of that Θεοσεβεια, or Ευσεβεια, which is the most, if not the only, discriminative Characteristic of man in this lower world. Αρχην απαντων κ᾽ τελος ποιει Θεον· "Him first—him last—him midst, and without end:" Οτι

These elementary Principles, or primary Truths, whether they relate to philosophic, moral, or religious Science, are the Standards, Measures, and Rules, of all Reason, Virtue, and Excellence: and, therefore, previously necessary to be understood, and admitted. They are the Data, upon which we proceed; the Postulata, which we require. They ought, therefore, to be as intuitively clear, self-evident, and definitive, as their nature will allow: and such is their importance, that, "nothing is more fatal than the admission of wrong Principles." Persons of the most exalted Understanding have as much need to guard against them, as those of the meanest capacity. If they are so imprudent, or so unfortunate, as to adopt them, their superior genius, like the strength of a mad-man, will serve no other purpose than to involve them in greater difficulties, and give them the power of doing more mischief: of which, we have had some very striking and melancholy proofs in recent history.

That no disgust, or offence may be taken, by minds of Christian Simplicity, at this intermixture of different languages, as vain, or pedantic, the Writer begs leave to refer them, for a scriptural apology, to Rom. i. 14.

εξ αυτυ, κ᾽ δι᾽ αυτυ, κ᾽ εις αυτον, τα Παντα· αυτω η Δοξα εις τυς αιωνας· Αμην. Rom. xi. 36.

There can be neither Justice, Piety, Truth, Reason, nor Virtue, where the divine Being is not conceived of precisely in this view. It does not appear to be essentially requisite to our real Excellence, or to our supreme Happiness, that we should have clear and philosophic ideas of all the divine attributes, and glories; but, it is absolutely necessary, that we should have this general impression of the Godhead on our Minds, and Hearts. Of all the Principles, both of Religion, and of Morality, this is the Alpha, and the Omega. Τηϛ περι τυ Θευ ευσεβειας ισθι οτι το κυριωτατον εκεινο εϛιν, ορθας υποληψεις περι αυτων εχειν. EPICT.

2.

REVELATION is the only Mirrour of moral Truth, Science, and Goodness *.

Ρημα θειον Κανων βιε . . . Οιαξ τε βιε ο Νομος θεε . . . Ερευνατε τας Γραφας της σωτηριας πηγας . . . Αγαθοτητος κρηνη Μυθος Ζηνος υψιστε . . . Χιλος ψυχων Ρημα θειον . . . Θεσμος συνειδησιν θιγει, κ᾽ εις οδον αλυοντα επαναγει . . . Νεφος φρενος αυγη αγιας γραφης διει.

No person can have studied the philosophy of universal History, and the cha-

* Where the divine Being himself condescends to be the Teacher, human Reason has arrived at her ne plus ultra: she must submit with all becoming humility to be instructed; nor presume, either to judge of his determinations, or to add any thing to them. "They are all of that kind of first Principles, which give evidence to, but receive no evidence from, our conclusions." They only are the Criterion, by which to regulate our ideas of moral Truth, Virtue, and Happiness; the sole Standard of, what has been called, the Reason and Fitness of things. The Truth of things, the Reason of things, and the Fitness of things, are all to be sought for in one and the same Source—Ο Λογος τε Θεε. Prov. ii. 1—6.

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racter of Man, as delineated in its various annals, with merited attention, who is not convinced of the *necessity* of such a Revelation. Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, seem to have sighed after it. "Let their Attainments be what they might, they never ascribed them to their own Reason, and Sagacity—but, always lamented the darkness of their Intellect, the weakness of the human Mind, the little satisfaction they met with in their most diligent Search, and the want of a better Guide."—This was their frequent language; and, in so far, they were honest and ingenuous: qualities, in which our modern Heathens are not very proficient.

"That Pythagoras drew his knowledge from the Hebrew Fountains, is what all writers, sacred and profane, do testify and aver: that Socrates and Plato took from him the principal part of that knowledge, touching God, the Soul's immortality, and the conduct of life and manners, has been

doubted by no person of fair inquiry; and, that it went from him into the schools of Aristotle, and so derived and diffused almost into the whole world, is in like manner attested by all the really learned."

The particular and most valuable use, which I apprehend is to be made of this Revelation, is, to regard it as the only unerring Source of *moral* truth, science, and goodness, and to consult it accordingly. Upon this principle alone can it be exalted and estimated, as we find it is, by all the inspired Penmen. Take a specimen from the whole hundred and nineteenth Psalm: which is no less beautiful, than instructive, in this view of it. The language is extravagant hyperbole in any other light.

3.

True Excellence is the reflex Image, however faint, of the divine Nature,

Beauty, and Glory—traced on the human Soul by an almighty, though invisible, Agency.

The Devotees of human Reason, Philosophy, and Learning, are extremely apt to start back at the sound of invisible Agency, and supernatural Influence; and, without either caution, or delicacy, to pronounce it fanaticism, idiocy, and enthusiasm. A little of the *decens*, in this case—not to say, the *verum*—would direct them to use a more becoming reverence, and less precipitancy: for, few men perhaps have made more strenuous and rational efforts, to guard the human mind against every degree of false Enthusiasm, than Locke; yet, even he has ingenuously acknowledged:

"In what I have said, I am far from denying that God can, or doth sometimes, enlighten mens minds in the apprehending of certain Truths, or excite them to good Actions, by the immediate influence

and assistance of the holy Spirit. But, in such cases, we have Reason and the Scripture, to know whether it be from God, or no."—Unquestionably: for, one of the Canons of that Scripture itself is, Isa. viii. 20.

It is worthy to be noticed, that the philosophic schools of ancient Greece, and Rome, were no strangers to this idea—ignorant, as they were, of the several particulars, in which the divine Image consisted: still we shall find them saying, "that no man can be great, but as illuminated by some ray, or inspired by some breath, from Heaven:" that, "it is not enough to enterprize that which is laudable, as if the success were in our own Power, and without need of assistance from God: no, we must implore the divine Aid: wherefore, think upon God, and call upon his holy aid and assistance, just as the poor Mariners do, in a sinking condition, upon Castor and Pollux." See Cicero, Hierocles, Xenophon, Epictetus, and others.

We shall find Socrates continually affirming, that, "Good men are the only wise: that, all true knowledge of the Gods," as he expressed it, "is from the Gods themselves: that, the mind of man stands in need of divine Illumination, to understand divine things, as much as the eye wants the light of the Sun, to see visible things: and that, even virtue itself is neither from nature, nor discipline, but θεια μοιρα, *by some divine influence.*"—2 Cor. iii. 18 . . . 4. 6.

"Virtue," says a very ancient writer, "is the Image of God in the rational Soul: and we cannot acquire this Image, unless we look to that Object, by resembling of which, we shall acquire the beautiful. The Fountain of eternal nature is the eternal Cause of all; not only of being, but of well-being—which diffuses its native goodness through the whole universe, like a pure intellectual Light. For, as nothing is like the Sun, but by the solar influences, so, nothing can resemble God,

but by an emanation of the divine light into the soul."

4.

There is neither Piety, nor Virtue, without divine Grace.

Ουδεις ευς πλην τ̀ Θεȣ. Ου δυναται ανθρωπος λαμβανειν ȣδεν, εαν μη η δεδομενον αυτω εκ τ̀ ȣρανȣ. Τα δε παντα εκ τȣ Θεȣ. Joh. iii. 27. 2 Cor. v. 18.

Grace, is divine Influence under a peculiar specification: of which, we can have no clear and distinct, much less any adequate conception, but as we study it in the pure Oracles of God *. The most

* Those oracles will instruct us to look upon it as an immediate and powerful, though secret Operation of God upon the human Soul; by which, it is renovated, enlightened, and purified: by which, it is refined, and exalted, above all the powers of Reason and Nature, in their most improved state of cultivation: for, it is this, and nothing but this, which produces within us every thing that is serious, sanctifying, and felicitating, in Truth, Virtue, and Bliss. Learning and eloquence may display their utmost energies, in the recommendation of these things,

celebrated writers of all heathen Antiquity were utter strangers to it: and this is the

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" still, however clear the conviction, and captivating the charms, of moral Truth may be—men will both resist its evidence, and disgrace its beauty; however they may admire Virtue, in idea, as leading to the greatest Good, they will reject and dishonour it, in practice; unless the Understanding be enlightened, the Spirit renewed, and the Will converted, by supernatural Grace. Because, Passion, which is in a contrary interest, will prove an overmatch for Reason, and prevail on the Heart, to cultivate apparent Happiness, at the shrine of Pleasure, Ambition, or Avarice."—All History, Experience, and Scripture, establish this assertion: neither will it be controverted by those, who have any just ideas of Truth, Virtue, and Happiness.

Nothing, however, is intended here, in opposition to any possible use and improvement, that can be made of that Light of nature, and those principles of Reason, for which so many contend. We envy neither the Understanding, nor the Felicity, of those, who prefer the sombre moonshine to the glowing Sun. What we argue, is, that genuine Christianity never yet taught any man to repose any confidence in his moral Powers, or inherent Sufficiency, for that kind of Excellence, which will stand the final Test: *και εκαστου το εργον οποιον εστι, το πυρ δοκιμασει.* 1 Cor. iii. 13. *Δοκιμαζειν*— propriè est explorare qualis *in se* res sit, et à diversis aut contariis discernere. It is translated, *try*; and signifies such a trial, as Goldsmiths use, touching metal, to discern good, from counterfeit; for which they have a certain instrument, called, a Touchstone.

subject, with which, I apprehend, we are most intimately concerned, in our pursuit of Truth, Excellence, and Good. I would therefore beg permission, to say to those, who are wisely and happily engaged in such pursuits, Ερευνατε τας Γραφας. Ισθι εν αυταις. John v. 39. 1 Tim. iv. 15. This is the only method I dare recommend, as the most certain and successful, if we mean to acquire any just ideas of its nature, necessity, use, operations, value, or extent. As it is the Source of all the divine Blessings, it is the primum Mobile of all the christian Virtues. Search, and see; 1 Cor. xv. 10.

5.

REAL HAPPINESS is the peculiar Gift of Heaven*.

* In laying down this as a primary Principle, the stress is to be placed on the epithet, *real*—in contradistinction to those visions and dreams of transitory satisfaction, which nothing but Folly, Levity, or Infidelity, will ever dignify with the name of Happiness. Our concern is, with the truth of Bliss—as substantial, as it is eternal. Otherwise, we readily admit, that, Felicitas cui præcipua

Μακαρα αδρειν αιωνα δωρον εςι τε εν υψει ναιοντος. Πασα δοσις αγαθη, ϗ παν δωρημα τελειον

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fuerit homini, non est humani judicii: "no man can judge what the Happiness of another consists in." Men's respective happinesses or pleasures ought to be valued, as they are to the persons themselves, whose they are: or, according to the thoughts and sense, which they have of them. Thus, "Folly may be Joy to him, who is destitute of wisdom;" and what is fascinating to me, may be ridiculous and contemptible to another: and indeed, in the eye both of Reason, and Religion.

We however are treating of that Happiness, whose Sources can never be dried up, and whose Foundation is as immoveable as the Throne of Heaven: for which, every human Being must be entirely and for ever indebted to Him, who sitteth thereon. He indeed must be the supreme Object of it, as well as its Author and Cause. An Immortal forgets his Nature, his Dignity, and his Interest, whenever he is satisfied with pleasures, which are not as endless as his Existence: and there is only one Quarter, from whence they can possibly arise: "neglecting which, the whole world is unavoidably busy in complaining; Princes and Subjects, Nobles and Commons, Learned and Ignorant, old and young, of all Countries, at all Times."

We shall demonstrate, that, Nil sine Numine felix: qui suas Cogitationes ad Deum non adhibet, sua Consilia ad Deum non refert, cujus Animus cum Deo non loquitur, sæpe is in fraudem, in errores inducitur; sæpe labitur, aut offendit; sæpe falsâ quâdam rerum huma-

ανωθεν εςι. Τα δε παντα εκ τυ Θευ . . . See 2 Cor. v. 18—. Jam. i. 16, 17. . . The sad apostacy of man, from this fundamental Axiom of Truth, Reason, and Revelation, is the fatal and fruitful Source of universal Vice, and Misery. Jer. ii. 12, 13.

No Principle can be of greater importance to the true Felicity of Man, than this: because, all imaginary Schemes of Happiness, which are sure to issue in the most bitter, if not irreparable disappointment, originate in false ideas of Happiness itself. We must, by a necessity of nature, and in the reason of things, continue restless inhabitants of a disordered world, till we have recourse to "The Fountain of living Waters." The utmost attention therefore will be paid, in this

narum specie deceptus: and, in almost every situation of life, prosperous or adverse, is compelled to sigh out in secret bitterness, Næ ego homo sum infelix, et infortunatus!

Few Writers of celebrity have drawn the Picture of human Life in deeper shades than the Author of "The Religion of Nature delineated."

System, to that Ultimatum of Man, his Existence, and his Pursuits; which, we conceive, can never be attained, but in the possession of that Reason, Virtue, and Moral, we shall hereafter propose to his highest regard.

6.

A RELIGIOUS TASTE is the supreme wisdom of Man.*

* This, I apprehend, is the true idea of Το φρονημα τε Πνευματος, ζωη και ειρηνη. Φρονημα quod quis sapit. It comprehends in it the act and exercise, both of the Mind, and Will, and the very best thoughts, inclinations, and affections of the human Soul: and, for that reason, is indifferently translated Wisdom, or Affection.

After all the metaphysical Disquisitions, with which we have been amused, upon the Το ηγεμονικον, or governing Principle in man, it will be found, that his *Taste* is that, which universally prevails. Whatever he most relishes, he most ardently pursues. Trahit sua quemque Voluptas. In his Understanding and Judgment, he may both see, and approve, what right Reason and true Virtue recommend: but, if his Affections take a different turn, all their superior, but unsuccessful, dictates will be scattered to the winds. It is not enough, to cultivate the Knowledge of divine things; we must have *a Taste* for

Ου τα κατω, αλλα τα ανω φρονειν δει . . . Τυτο δραε, κ᾽ μακαρ εση. See Rom. viii. 5, 6 . . . Col. iii. 1—4.

We state, that the Source, or Cause, of all true Felicity, consists in the knowledge of such things, as are *most* excellent, and divine; and that, Virtue is the habitual Pursuit of that, which is absolutely and simply *best*: but, we must maintain, at the same time, that this Felicity can never

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them: without which, we can no more excel in moral Attainments, than in the fine Arts. The dullest of all dull things, is an *insipid* profession of a Religion so sublime, and elevating, as Christianity: all whose language is, Φρονει τα τε Θεε· Τα ανω φρονειτε· in direct opposition to those earthly, groveling Propensities, which are so constitutional to us all—though so variously modified.

O! curvæ in terras Animæ, et cœlestium inanes!

Amidst the various Distinctions, which obtain among men—such as rich, great, noble, polite, elegant, and learned—*a religious Taste*, perhaps, is the only one, that constitutes any *essential* difference between them in the eye of Heaven. The Book of Psalms affords a most beautiful illustration of what we mean by this species of Taste.

be enjoyed without an inward *Taste* for such things. There must be a something in the frame congenial with them; a kind of *new Sense*; analogous, in its nature, to that, by which we are capacitated to enjoy all the varieties of animal Sensation.

A person, who has no *Taste* for Musick, Painting, Architecture, or the numerous beauties of Nature, and Art, which might be detailed, can form no idea of the pleasures, they receive from these things, who have. To him, it appears all romance, conceit, and the sport of Imagination.—To cultivate this Taste for right Reason, and christian Philosophy, is the sublime of wisdom.

7.

Simplicity, and Integrity, are essential to the christian Character.

Αφελεις πελεσθαι οφειλομεν. Because, neither can Truth be discovered, nor Virtue

attained, nor Happiness enjoyed, without this. Ου δερκεσι αιγλην οι σχετλιοι*.

Simplicity and Integrity are those moral excellencies, by which the Understanding, the Will, and the Affections are carried on in a direct line towards that which is absolutely the best, both in point of Virtue, and of Happiness: for Virtue and Happiness must never be disjoined.

The noblest Minds are always the most ingenuous, the most undisguised, and the least reserved: they are the farthest removed from that dissimulation, subtilty, and guile, which belong to the meridian

* "The fullest sunshine cannot enlighten those, who close their eyes against its luminous influence. Truth is a hidden Treasure, which none can discover, but those, who search after it with a generous mind, and upright heart, and are resolute to sacrifice every thing to the love of it, when known. Whoever does not find in himself these dispositions, is not yet prepared for the search of Truth: and, without this preparation of the heart, it is almost needless to read this, or any other work, which professes to plead the cause of pure, genuine Christianity."

of this world. They are a sort of transparent Beings. The wisdom of God has therefore honoured them with the very exalted title of, "The Children of Light." Ειλικρινεις· *Sinceri*; quasi χρινειν εν ειλῃ; those, who will bear to be examined by the beams of the Sun — "The Sun of Righteousness."

One of the sacred penmen has called this Sincerity, Ειλικρινεια Θεϑ. 2 Cor. i. 12. For, there is a Sincerity of a very different stamp, and which is often commended to a very dangerous degree. Can there be any thing more ignorant, or more subversive of all *true* Religion, and Virtue, than that too common maxim, which has obtained among us, which makes Sincerity the *Standard* of Goodness, Excellence, and moral Character? May not one man be as sincerely in the wrong, as another is in the right? was not Saul, the unconverted Persecutor, and Blasphemer, *as sincere*, as Paul the Christian, and the Apostle? But, will you be so irrational, so inconsiderate, I

will add, so impious, as to place them on a level in your estimation? Who can be so undiscerning, as not to know, that this person may preach, or believe, a falsehood, with as much *sincerity*, as that person does the truth: but, is there not an essential difference between them?

The maxim, here protested, will afford a sanction for all the errors, heresies, and abominations, that the human intellect can broach; and, in its immediate tendency, is calculated to render the Christian Revelation futile and useless. Our public Teachers would, I humbly apprehend, do well and wisely, to consider this matter; as it belongs more especially to their province.

8.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY is a Spirit of Humility, and an essential Qualification for eternal Bliss.*

* I call that *essential*, without which any thing cannot be: as when I say, that the faculty of Reason is essential

Ιλησι τοις ταπεινοις ο Σωτηρ, κ᾽ ολυμπε αυτοις θυραν ανοιγει . . . Ου καθαρει αμαρτηματα, ο αρνεμενος. Οια η οϊζυς προς οικτον κελευθος . . . Ευχαι αγερωχων ψωα εμπροσθεν τε Θεε. All these Maxims of pith, and wisdom, are confirmed by the voice of Revelation, in passages so numerous, that it is hardly possible to place your eye on a single page of the sacred Volume, in which we are not taught the odiousness of Pride, and the excellence of Humility.*

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to a rational Being, and that divine Grace is essential to the formation of the christian Character: so here, I mean to affirm, that Glory, Honour, and Immortality in a future state, are provided only for those, who are cloathed with Humility, in the present life.

* "The least self-attribution, self-appropriation, or self-complacency, in the divine gifts, graces, and communications, is an usurpation on the rights of God. On the contrary, self-preterition, self-evacuation, and self-annihilation, of the infinitely little, before the infinitely great, is the eternal sacrifice, which created beings owe to the absolute Infinite." Such are the celestial ideas exhibited for our learning and imitation, in Is. vi. 1—3. Rev. iv.

The following sheets, therefore, it may be hoped, will be excused, if they draw out all the artillery of Heaven against the former, and exert their utmost powers to promote the latter. Such an effort will be not less an act of Benevolence, than of Piety; since Pride is sure to bar our entrance to the Mansions of Bliss, and Humility alone can qualify us for the fruition of their peculiar Felicity.

No just ideas were ever formed of the human nature, in its relation to the divine Being, and to the grand scheme of

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" Hence, in all states, self-annihilation, which is the only *true humility*, is the sole preservative of Angels unfallen, and the sole restorative of souls degenerated: without this virtue, the beatific Vision would become a source of self-love, and self-attribution." Pride was the origin of all Evil. Can you think then, that the Scripture saith in vain, and more than once, " God resisteth," αντιτασσεται, *setteth himself in battle array*, " against the Proud?" Superbi enim sunt veluti Gloriæ divinæ invasores—dum se rapiunt quod est Dei: invasoribus autem & raptoribus, vis armata opponi consuevit. Sic Deus, & verbis, & factis, superborum conatibus adversatur. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.

Redemption by The Messiah, but what tended to cover it with the vesture of Self-abasement. Job. xlii. 5, 6.*

9.

A FALSE GUIDE, like an Ignis fatuus, may prove in the issue a most fatal light; while a true one is a lamp of life.

Πολλοι μεν το ορθον, γαυσον ποιεσι· ολιγοι, δ' εναντιον. Τυφλος τυφλον αγων εις βοθρον εαυτον μετ' αυτε ριπτει. Οδηγος εν οδω, δελετρον †.

* What an Example is here! And how totally different from all that arrogance, conceit, and self-sufficiency, which unenlightened human Reason and Science have dared to assume in the presence of the God of Revelation! Would it not be much wiser, and safer, seriously to regard what is written in Is. lvii. 15. lxvi. 1, 2. Matth. xviii. 1—3? Ταυτα μελετα.

† Every age has its Impostors, Seducers, and Deceivers. Ought we not then to be guarded against them? "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?" are questions of greater importance than the generality of mankind seem to think. They consult not what is Truth, in this case—but, what is pleasing. But, is it not a dismal presage in the affair of Salvation, when we run after those, whose Doctrine is most gratifying to our Pride, Prejudice, and Passions, and turn away from such as are the most penetrating, and alarming? 1 John. iv. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.

There is no Metamorphosis so much to be dreaded, by those, who mean to adhere to the dictates of the Christian Revelation, as " Satan transformed into an Angel of light:" of which, there can hardly be a more decided symptom, than when a public Teacher of our Religion can speak lightly of *the Doctrines of Truth*; which, to say the least of them, are among the most peculiar characteristicks of that Revelation.

" True Religion," we have been told by an amiable and virtuous Philosopher, but no Preacher, " tends to make man great, and good, and happy; and, if so, its *Doctrines* can never be too firmly believed, nor held in too high veneration. Why then should we ever represent them as merely *speculative notions*, about which we may safely differ? or, why should we so conceal or disguise them, as if they were Doctrines we were ashamed to own? Is this honesty? is this integrity? is this

the practice of Piety? What! to insult the wisdom of Heaven, by blushing, openly to avow, what he hath judged fit openly to reveal! Conviction, and steadiness of Principles, is that which gives dignity, consistency, and spirit, to human Conduct. It constitutes, as it were, the vital stamina of a great and manly Character; whereas, duplicity and disguise, betray a weak and sickly understanding, from which nothing can be expected, but cowardice and mutability."

Is it not something worse than shocking, to hear these Doctrines degraded by the very persons, who derive secular Emoluments from their presumed divinity?

It may be supposed, I think, without the smallest trait of illiberality, that all the Cautions, and Notices, which are interspersed in the Oracles of Heaven, on this topic, are not more the language of infinite Benevolence, than of Expediency; and, that they arise out of the necessity of

the case. Were there no false Guides, and were it not dangerous to listen to them, such Caveats would be superfluous, and nugatory. Matt. vii. 15.

Be it observed, that no Characters were resented, or exposed, with such poignant reproof, by "The chief Shepherd," during his public Ministry, as these. Matt. xxiii. merits great attention, in this view. Προσεχετε δε απο των ψευδοπροφητων.

These then are the nine great Arches, upon which we purpose to erect, and elevate, this *Temple of Truth:* and, should the candid Reader survey them with the care and accuracy, which we have used, we have no doubt of their being admitted as Maxima, and first Principles, in this kind of moral Architecture. So far from fearing, we even court the nicest examination.

Acts xvii. 11, 12.

A

COMPENDIUM

OF

THE PRIMARY DOCTRINES

EXHIBITED IN

THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH.

1.

THE Salvation of Man, is that, which includes, and constitutes, all his Religion, Excellence, and Felicity, for both worlds *.

* While we readily admit, that, "supposing the christian Revelation to be of divine origin, the Doctrine contained therein is the only Religion, which justifies the ways of eternal Providence, renders the Deity amiable to his creatures, reconciles all his moral Attributes—and, in fine, that the holy Scriptures are the most sublime System of Theology, and Philosophy, concerning God and Nature;" we affirm, that their grand leading Idea, their most prominent Feature, is, *The Salvation of Man:* which is one of those complex phrases, that must be analytically explained, before it can be clearly and fully understood.

2.

Salvation is by Grace.

3.

Salvation is through Faith.

4.

The Faith, by which we are saved, is the special Gift of God *.

* As it is a main object with us, to teach, by preserving just and important distinctions—Qui benè distinguit, benè docet—may it not be proper to remark here, that, when the Author of the celebrated "Essay on human Understanding" is agitating the topic, of *Faith*, he discusses it, as it more immediately respects the Intellect, and in a way of appeal to rational evidence? This may be called, if you please, *the philosophy of Faith*. But, Christianity proceeds in a totally different mode—and always enforces it upon us, as *a Grace of the Heart*—or, the vital Principle of all true Religion, Virtue, and Peace; as we hope to make appear to the unbiassed Enquirer: not by addressing his passions, but by the force of cool, decisive argument.

It may be of use too, to subjoin another remark; that, if there be no other way, to Reason and Faith, more ex-

5.

Salvation is not of Works, lest any Man should boast.

6.

Real Christians are the Workmanship of God, in a very sublime and exclusive sense.

7.

There is no *true Happiness*, but what is founded upon the Principles, and derived from the Sources, of Christianity *.

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peditious, and less obscure, than that, which this great Philosopher and Logician has prescribed, the Mass of society must for ever remain irrational, and unbelieving.

* " So that, he, who will take out his portion in this life, must lose it in the next. What then, against our nature, and against our reason, hinders us from prosecuting our *chiefest Good?* Want of Faith. All is resolvable into that alone. For, indeed, the supreme Happiness and Misery of rational Beings, through all variation of circumstances, and through every period of their existence, is of a piece—or of the same kind. What then are the *good* and *bad*, but the *wretched* and *happy?* I like not a certain modest

8.

The habitual practice of Piety, and Virtue, is the grand Evidence of our being in a State of Grace, and Salvation.

9.

A supernatural Agency is indispensably necessary to form the Christian Character*.

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All the divine Favours and Blessings, which relate to their supreme Excellence

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Faint-heartedness in the friends and advocates of what is Truth and Virtue. A Christian should let see what an Animation there is in Christianity, above all that the world may admire besides. Christianity should be the Boast, as well as the Comfort, of our hearts."

* There can be no stronger proof, that the Character itself is entirely unknown, where the necessity of this Agency is disputed. If the time and talents, which have been wasted in some polemical contests, had been applied to the maintenance and establishment of this great practical Thesis, Mankind might have been much better informed in theologic Science, and christian Virtue.

and Bliss, are communicated to the human Race, through the great Mediator, and Redeemer. He is the central Point of union between God and Men. 1 Cor. i. 29—31. Eph. i. 3—10.

11.

It is a principal Design of the Godhead, in the Œconomy of Redemption, most illustriously to display the exceeding riches, or, the glory, of his Grace *.

* It is therefore requisite, that we should be acquainted with the whole of that Œconomy; so far, I mean, as it is revealed in the sacred Volume. "Nothing, it has been said, is so rare, as a Genius comprehending at once the whole of any subject. As nothing in the military art is so rare as that self-possession, which enables a General to pervade a whole army, and to be present, and to speak, in every part of the field of battle—so, in the sciences, nothing is so uncommon, as that comprehensive kind of attention, which enables a man always to think, and speak, in perfect harmony with himself; and so to avoid destroying one part of his Thesis, while he establishes the other."

To us, however, it does not seem to require any thing like a Genius so extraordinary; otherwise, we should have been the last person to have engaged in such an en-

12.

Christianity is altogether a Religion of Grace*.

terprize. The twelve Propositions, here submitted, comprize an entire System; which, a moderate Capacity, and that degree of Consideration, which we flatter ourselves they deserve, may easily grasp, and retain. The Method, we have pursued in the following Arrangement, is, to descend from these first Principles to their necessary Consequences, and to dispose every Truth in its due place, with order, clearness, and precision. "For, what is a System—but a Chain of truths well combined? whatever be their nature, whether mathematical, physical, or moral. All weak and effeminate minds, that hover about the surface of Truth, that have not force enough to try its depths, and that cannot support a continued series of reasoning, very naturally exclaim against Systems. Generally speaking, they can relish nothing but poetical fiction, sprightly imagination, and sparkling wit."

* We have heard, and we have read, of the superstitions of Reason, and Learning—of the idolatries of Paganism—and of the Mahometan imposture; but, to call either of those, by the sacred and honourable name of, *Religion*, is, in our idea, a most preposterous, not to say, impious, abuse of words. The fact is, that, from the eventful crisis of "Man's first disobedience," there never has been but one Religion in the world—or, Christianity,

We could wish, that all these Propositions may be considered, as so many

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under different forms, and in several successive editions; such as, Christianity, in Promise—in Type—and in Prophecy; under the patriarchal—under the mosaic, or levitical—and, under the prophetic Dispensation; until "the fulness of the time was come," when this great "Mystery of Godliness" was to be consummated in the Person, Sacrifice, and Resurrection, of THE MESSIAH. A Mystery, which from the beginning has been removed, as far as possible, from any thing like a Religion of Nature, Reason, and Philosophy—if by that be intended, as I presume, a Religion, which the Light of nature, reason, or philosophy, could of itself discover, and frame. For, it has been from the beginning, and in every varied modification, *A Religion of Grace:* which we pledge ourselves fully to demonstrate to every impartial and ingenuous mind.

By others, it has been already and repeatedly proved, with laborious Research, and profuse Erudition, that, "Vestiges of all the principal doctrines of the Christian Religion are to be found in the monuments, writings, or mythologies, of all nations, and ages; and that these vestiges are Emanations of the ancient, primitive, universal Religion of mankind, transmitted from the beginning of the world by the antediluvian to the postdiluvian patriarchs; and, by them, to their posterity, that peopled the face of the earth."—Those, who have any legal claim to the title of, learned, cannot be ignorant of this: and some

Christian Aphorisms: and we have treated them, as containing matters of the highest import to the moral Nature, Excellence, and Dignity, of every human Being: compared with which, all the possible acquisitions of Literature, Wealth, and Fame, and all the most refined enjoyments of time and sense, are, according to the doctrine of just proportion, and in our Scale, lighter than a shade.

With the feeble hand of an intellectual Infant, we have ventured to light our glimmering Taper, at the Sun of Truth, Righteousness, and Glory: and, should we be so happy, as to conduct one benighted Traveller, who is feeling his way through all the gloom and darkness of Scepticism, and Infidelity, which, at this moment, are clouding our hemisphere, the hours of sober recollection, which have been devoted to this service, will not be lost; nor shall we have lived an entirely useless Incum-

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of them might be well employed, in compiling, "The Travels of Revelation throughout the habitable globe, from the earliest period to the present crisis."

berer of the Soil we tread, and the Clime we breathe.

To those, who are in the intelligent habit of viewing Truth, *in the whole*, and not by parcels, and fragments, it will be extremely gratifying, to perceive "the harmony, order, and connection of truths, in the preceding disposition; the unity of the Principles—their mutual dependence on each other—their tendency to elevate the Heart, at the same time that they enlighten the Understanding: so that, each proposition may be said to reflect increasing light on the other, in regular gradation. For, all Truth being of a coherent nature, it is impossible to separate one branch from another, and see it in all its beauty. I intreat, therefore, that those, who honour these pages with their inspection, will not form any judgment from detached parts, but survey the whole, in its professed consistency.*"

* So very little, however, are these essential Characteristicks of our Religion understood, or regarded, that "not only the Christian Revelation, but, the moral perfections

" Divine Truth, like an elegant and finished building, may be contemplated in its parts, distinctly: but, though they may be distinguished, they should not be se-

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and government of God, and the very being of Virtue, have been made a subject of dispute. Freethinkers are not ashamed to publish their doubts concerning these unquestionable and self-evident Realities! Divines and Philosophers have not disdained to establish them by a multiplicity of arguments! What is still more to be regretted, the Preachers of the Gospel, forgetting the dignity of their Character, and the design of their office, have condescended to plead the cause of Religion, in much the same manner as Lawyers maintain a disputed right of property! They have entered into reasonings about piety, justice, and benevolence, too profound to be fathomed by the multitude, and too subtile to produce any good effect! Instead of setting forth the displays of divine Perfection in the dispensation of the Gospel, so admirably calculated to touch, to penetrate, and to subdue, the human mind, they have entertained their audiences with long and laboured proofs of a Revelation from God, with learned Disquisitions, and philosophic Essays, on the nature of virtue and morality! May not this be called, with the greatest propriety, a throwing *cold water* on Religion? And ought it not to be considered as one of the chief causes of that fatal and general insensibility to all its concerns, of which we so frequently, and so justly, complain? The multitude have been astonished—wise men have been ashamed—and good men grieved—at this treatment of Religion, so much beneath its dignity."

parated: because, however they may strike us, when singly viewed, it is only as related to *the whole*, and as *united*, that we arrive at a suitable conception of the beauty of the building, and of the Builder's design*. If indeed, the object of pursuit be only our own gratification, and

* This, if I comprehend it right, is one of the principal uses, for which we are taught the art of Logic; or, of reasoning with perspicuity, and method—so as to arrange our own ideas, to connect each link in a series of arguments, and, eventually, to exhibit Truth, according to its different kinds, and importance, to the greatest possible advantage, in point of clearness, fullness, and comprehension. But, throw aside *System*, and what will become of Logic? And why prefer detached pieces, to *a great whole?* Is it not much the same, as preferring a Segment of science, to a *Circle?* or the separate parts of an Edifice, to the complete Fabrick. 'Tis a whimsical sort of a Taste, to say the least of it.

"*System*," says our first Lexicographer, "is a combination of things acting together: a Scheme, which unites many things *in order*."—"The best way to learn any Science, is, to begin with a regular System," says a great Logician: that is, to make use of some short and plain Scheme of that Science, well drawn up into a narrow compass. Now, we deal much in Essays, and despise systematic learning: whereas, our Fathers had *a just value* for regularity, and systems."

not a desire of knowing the end of the great Architect, our time is mispent, and our labour without honour."

1 Cor. x. 15.

Far be it from us, to encourage any man in an undue partiality for a System: but, if the system, he prefers, be founded in *Truth*, can he be too ardently attached to it? The most learned men in every preceding age have taught all truth, by system. But, there is *a Fashion*, it is said, in every thing; and even Religion must conform to it!

"We think our Fathers, fools—so wise we grow!
"Our wiser Sons, no doubt, will think us so."

DEFINITIONS,

OF

THE MOST IMPORTANT TERMS,

INTRODUCED IN THE

SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION*.

I SHALL begin with that, which is the very Basis of every thing, that merits the name

* "Much of the disputes, and, consequently, many of the inconveniences of this world, arise from the strange difficulty—for, a strange one it is—that men find, in understanding each other's meaning. Hence the never ending game of Cross-purposes, in which all of us, at times, are so much engaged. A leading Cause of this disunion, is, a negligence in using Terms appropriate to their object. The Philosopher, it is true—whether metaphysical, moral, or christian—must generalize his ideas, to compass the views of his enquiring Mind: but, in conveying the fruits of his study and reflection to others, he must condescend to weigh *Words*—compare *Terms*—and preclude all possibility of Error, in those he instructs, by using a simplicity of *Definition*, a perspicuity of *Expression*, and where the tameness of language denies the immediate term, a clearness of periphrase, which not only invites, but creates conception."—Where a writer means to inform, or improve, he will feel a proportionate Anxiety to be fully understood. 1 Cor. xiv. 7—11.

of Science, Reason, Philosophy, Religion, Virtue, or Good. And, what is that?

Truth.

Truth, according to my general application of the term, is, the Revelation, with which the divine Being hath been pleased to favour us, respecting his Nature, Perfections, Government, Will, and Purposes, in the sacred Scriptures: of which, nothing could be satisfactorily understood, without such a Revelation. We learn, from universal history, that every thing else could only be so many different modifications of absurd or ingenious Conjectures—in which, the human Mind could never rest. And hence, the more than two hundred various Opinions, which Varro had met with among the heathen Literati, concerning the chief Good of Man.

Nothing therefore can be more properly denominated ingenious trifling, than the vain Philosophy, which speaks of the Av-

ἄνθρωπος αὐτοδίδακτος, as having any intellectual and innate Power of discovering either Truth, Excellence, or Good: such a Being is a mere Figment of Imagination. For, there is no State or Stage of Man, in which he does not stand in need of Instruction, and Guidance, for that purpose. Nothing can be known with satisfying Certainty, respecting these primary Concerns, but by divine Revelation: and, if it be not treated, as such, with the highest regard, we are in so far chargeable with a practical contempt of that Revelation, together with all the Advantage, it is presumed to give us, over all the Schools of unenlightened philosophy.

Nothing can be more repugnant to common Sense, and moral Integrity, than to reject this Revelation, before we have acquainted ourselves with the complicated, not to say, irresistible, evidence for its divinity.

The fact is, nor can it be too frequently repeated, that, avowed Infidelity is seldom,

if ever, the result of diligent enquiry, of accurate research; but, the natural accompanyment of corrupt Principles, a depraved Heart, and a vicious Life. The apology, I offer, for this freedom of speech, is this—Πυθαγορας ερωτηθεις, τι ποιουσιν ανθρωποι θεω ομοιον, εφη, εαν αληθευωσι. "Pythagoras being asked what that was, by which Man resembled the Gods, replied, "By speaking the Truth."

Reason,

is that Faculty in man, by which, when it is suitably instructed, he is capacitated to judge of the true Proportion of things; of their nature, excellence, and utility, in relation to each other; and to make a due Estimate accordingly*. For example, and

* Some minute Philosophers are extremely fond, with equal extravagance and absurdity, of misrepresenting this intellectual Power, as if it had certain innate Ideas, or self-originating Sources of intelligence: though it is too evident, from unexceptionable fact and experience, to admit of any fair and honourable controversy, that it must be indebted for all its knowledge, *ab extra:* it is, after all, nothing more than a certain Quality of the

by way of elucidation: I wish to know, what proportion the riches, the pleasures, the honours, the friendships, of this present life, bear to the riches, the pleasures, the honours, the friendships, of the next: the direct Ratio, according to the judgment of the coolest Reason, is, as Time to

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mind, by which we perceive, arrange, compare, and decide. If that perception, arrangement, comparison, and the like, be right, and according to the Truth, Justice, and Reality of Things, it is *right Reason*; and, *vice versâ*. For, who does not know, that a Man may reason wrong, as well as right? Reason therefore can hardly be called a Good *in se:* it is good, or evil, according to the direction it takes.

"The Spirit of a man," said a great Philosopher, "is the Candle of the Lord." True. But, as a candle can answer none of the purposes, it is intended for, without Light, so this intellectual Power, or Capacity, in man, can be of no effective use in Religion, without divine Illumination. It has indeed been exalted, and celebrated, as if it were the first, not to say the only Revelation from God; though it is, properly speaking, no Revelation at all. It is the *Eye*—not, the *Light*. It can, with certainty, know nothing concerning the things of another world, but by Information from thence.—Theology, or, the christian Revelation, is the supreme Reason, Θεος λογος: we must therefore light our Candle by that Sun.

Eternity; or, to speak philosophically, as Unit to infinite. So that, the Man, who is sacrificing the former to the latter, in his Affections, and Pursuits, is entirely destitute of the Mens sana; he is inverting the immutable Order, and acting against the Truth, of things; and, in the eye of Reason, and Justice, he ought to be considered as a Subverter of the whole System of Religion, and Virtue. He is, if I may be permitted the phrase, a living υστερον προτερον.

PHILOSOPHY,

in the sublime sense, in which it is used in these strictures, is, the Love of that Wisdom, which is so universally celebrated in the inspired pages; which is supported by right Reason, productive of christian Virtue, and inseparably connected with the essential Happiness of Man. All other knowledge—whether of Mind, or Matter—of Physicks, or Metaphysicks—is mere *Science*; this, is *Sapience:* or, that inti-

macy with sacred Truth, right Reason, and evangelical Virtue, which is distinguished from a cold, unaffecting Speculation, by a pious *Taste*, or holy *Relish*, for divine things. Where this is wanting, it may be said of every other kind of Philosophy, Ου φρονεις τα τε Θεε. Matt. xvi. 23. And, I could refer to a pagan Philosopher, who has stated, in his dialect, that, "If the Gods have any care of human affairs, it should seem reasonable to suppose, they are most delighted with those, who live, and cultivate, what is most dear to *them*."

The fulsome strains, in which human Philosophy has been extolled, by persons of very superior Talents, and Erudition, may be inserted among the inexplicable mysteries of the human intellect. "That the Epicurean scheme was no other than Atheism disguised; that the hypothesis of the Stoics was little different from the Polytheism of the vulgar; and, that the faith of the Academics was, either none at all, or faint and fluctuating at the best,

will not be disputed by those, who have any knowledge of Antiquity. Let Cicero's dialogues concerning the nature of the Gods, stript of rhetorical embellishments, and reduced to simple propositions, be put into the hand of some pious Rustic, tolerably acquainted with his Bible, and he will be much astonished at the opinions of the ancients—the gross stupidity of the Epicureans, the frivolous superstition of the Stoics, and the presumptuous rashness of the Academics—and heartily thank God for bestowing on him the inestimable gift of the holy Scriptures."—And, will he not pity the unaccountable absurdity of some otherwise sensible and ingenious writers, who tell us, that, the κριτηριον of right Reason and Truth, or that, which is to be regarded in judging of right and truth, is *private*; that is, the *internal* evidence a Man has of certain truths? Nothing can be more inconsistent with universal fact, and experience, than this idea. No such innate Criterion, of Truth, and Right, ever existed, but in a vain and misguided Imagination. The

best powers of human reasoning have proved, that no man has an innate Idea, much less an innate Standard of truth.

Virtue,

I consider as a generic term, including in it every distinct species of Virtues; which I shall here subjoin, and arrange, according to their ascending Scale of excellence: that the Reader may see, in one comprehensive view, how many things are requisite, to render the christian Character complete. A Character, which ought to be as amiable in all its relative Connections with Society, as it is exalted in the sight of Him, who alone can form it*. For, we mean not to deviate, in the smallest degree, from that invariable Aphorism, Πασα

* Nothing however is to be considered as *amiable*, in this discussion, but as it approaches to the Character of The Messiah; which, in our view, is the Standard, or Criterion, of the το πρεπον, the το καλον, and the το αγαθον. John i. 14. To the same divine Object we are to look, and have recourse, for all necessary intelligence respecting the το επαινετον, ηδυ, και ωφελιμον. Col. ii. 3.

δοσις αγαθη, κ̣ παν δωρημα τελειον, ανωθεν εςι, καταβαινον απο τ̣ Πατρος των φωτων. Jam. i. 17. Right Reason, true Philosophy, and christian Virtue, are alike, and alone, the τα χαρισματα, or gracious Gifts of Heaven.

As the term, Virtue, is so extremely vague, equivocal, and undefined, in its common use, it should be minutely analyzed—in order to be clearly understood. Let us then reduce it to its decomposition, for that purpose.

There are, for instance, what may be denominated *the social Virtues;* such as, Urbanity, Politeness, Candour, Humanity, Courtesy, Hospitality, Benevolence, Sympathy, Generosity, Affability, Propriety, Friendship, and the like: all which may be reckoned among τα οσα προσφιλη, τα οσα ευφημα, "the things, which are lovely and of good report;" and, therefore, ought to be cultivated, as belonging to the kind affections, and as constituting what is called an amiable Character in civil Society.

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There are also what are discriminated from these, as *ethic, or ethiological Virtues*; such as, Justice, Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude, Fidelity, Honour, Veracity, Gratitude, Patience, Contentment, with several others of the same species; which more particularly come within the circle of moral Science. The former, have sometimes been distinguished, by the lesser—and the latter, by the greater, duties of life; and, therefore, ought to be encouraged, and commended. Aristotle, in his Ethics; Tully, in his Offices; and Seneca, in his Morals; have touched upon these, with surprising force, and eloquence, as calculated to form what is usually intended by a moral Character.

But, when we gain the Summit of all that is great, and good, and happy, in this lower world, we shall be surrounded with *the christian Virtues*; such as, Faith, Hope, Charity, Meekness, Humility, Penitence, Self-denial, Piety, Purity, and Zeal: which are the strongest lineaments, or most prominent features, in the christian Portrait.

Some there are, who cultivate the social Virtues, with little or no attention to any other; and some again, who are equally warm in the service of the ethical, without any particular regard to those, which far surpass them: but, if we mean to possess the totality of moral excellence, let us aspire to every virtue; especially to that assemblage, upon which the divine Being himself has thought fit to place the highest honour; though, sad to say, they are, too generally, the lowest in our esteem, and the last we pursue. Nevertheless, Matt. v. 3—12.

Morality,

is a term, which, when clearly understood, and properly applied, is comprehensive of every thing which relates to the moral Governor of the world—his moral Government—the moral Law—the moral Sense—moral Principles—and moral Conformity to the divine Will: of all which, our moral views are no otherwise correct, and

just, than as they are regulated by the oracles of Revelation*.

Of all the words in the English tongue, though there are very few more current,

* In my idea, therefore, of this complex term, which I now submit to general remark, I include all these particulars; 1. The knowledge of God, as the moral Governor of the world. 2. A right understanding of the moral Law, by which that Government is conducted, in its nature, purity, and perfection. 3. A consciousness of our moral responsibility. 4. The Renovation of the moral Sense, by divine Grace. 5. A clear perception of the peculiar manner, in which every moral action must be performed, to render it acceptable to God. 6. A conscientious regard to all the moral Virtues, so far as they are practicable by us in our respective and very different situations. 7. An anxious desire to attain to increasing degrees of every moral excellence.—Are not these, essential ingredients in the character of *a christian Moralist?* Neither is this at all incongruous with their idea of ethiologic science, who have defined it to be, "The acquisition of Happiness, by the knowledge of Truth, and the pursuit of Virtue." Indeed, we may learn more in the Academy of Plato, in the Porch of Zeno, and in the Lycæum of Aristotle, than in the writings of many a modern Scribbler on this theme. It was a Philosopher of one of these Schools, who said, that moral Virtue was, Εξις κατα τον ορθον Λογον, an "habit of acting according to right Reason;" that is, κατα την Θεολογιαν.

or whose signification is of greater concern, it would be very difficult to find many, that are less comprehended. I have aimed to discover the true reason of an ignorance, for which I dare not be so charitable, as to offer any excuse; and the most plausible, I apprehend, is, that for want of consideration, people are not conscious of it.

GRACE,

will be used to signify, according to the various manner in which it is introduced, either the gratuitous Favour of God—which is its primary sense; or, that operative Principle of the divine Life, which he communicates to the human Soul, to prepare it for the beatific Vision; or, that Beauty of his own Image, and Likeness, which he is pleased to delineate upon it *.

* The same thing may be otherwise thus represented, Grace, as it is in God, its great Original and Fountain, imports his free, sovereign, and special Love towards the objects of it. It must be *free*—or, it would not be, properly speaking, Grace. It is *sovereign*—because, he acts

I quote the language of a Philosopher, and a Prelate, who is said to have possessed "every virtue under Heaven," when I affirm with him, that "GRACE is the main point in the christian Dispensation;

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herein as the supreme Disposer of all good; "dividing to every man, severally, as he will—and working all things after the counsel of his own Will." And, it is said to be *special*—in order to distinguish it from those common gifts, whether of Nature, or of Providence, which he sometimes bestows with a lavish bounty on the wicked, as well as on the righteous.

Grace, as it is in us, should we be indeed partakers of it, is a divine, secret, energetic Influence, transfused, as it were, into the Soul, and extending itself through all its Faculties and Passions.

In all religious acts, exercises, and excellencies, I deem it equally the dictate of Truth, right Reason, and Virtue, to ascribe the *Velle*, the *Esse*, and the *Posse*, to a divine Power. I agree entirely with him, who has asserted, that, Hoc piarum mentium est, ut *nihil* sibi tribuant, sed *totum* Dei gratiæ. If I err, I am confident that the Scriptures themselves have led me into this error. An opportunity will hereafter occur, of proving this, to a degree of certainty, which will only fall short of mathematical demonstration: nor is any indulgence solicited of the Reader, in this case, but that he will look fairly at the light of that evidence, which shall be adduced, with an impartial eye.

nothing is oftener mentioned, or more considered, throughout the new Testament: wherein it is represented, as somewhat of *a very particular kind.* This same Grace is spoken of as the gift of God—as coming by Jesus Christ—as reigning, as abounding, as operating. Men are said to speak through Grace, to believe through Grace. Mention is made of the Glory of Grace, the Riches of Grace, the Stewards of Grace. Christians are said to be Heirs of grace, to receive grace, to stand in grace, to grow in grace. And, lastly, Grace is said to justify, and to save them. Hence, Christianity itself is called, the Covenant or Dispensation of Grace."

This is right Reason, and sacred Truth: of this Author's System of idealism, we say nothing. Let philosophers of another stamp see to that.

SALVATION,

is, the chief Good of Man: virtually involving in it his Peace, Purity, and Per-

fection; commencing in this life, and consummated in the next.

This is indisputably the most inviting and interesting light, in which the Scripture, in general, and Christianity in particular, can be either represented, or studied: for, the former is expressly called, "The Word of Salvation; and, the latter is, essentially, a Religion of Salvation. How is it then, that, among the numerous works, which are submitted to the public notice, by its Professors, enriched with human learning, classic elegance, and critical disquisition, we seldom meet with any thing, to inform us respecting the precise Nature, Way, Means, and Blessings, of Salvation? Especially, as there is nothing really valuable in right Reason, sound Philosophy, christian Virtue, pure Morality, and substantial Bliss, but what is conveyed in that term. Neither are they to be derived from any other possible Source, but that Salvation, which the inspired pages alone proclaim. Jam. v. 19, 20.

To err from *the Truth*, is the strait path to misery everlasting*.

* There never was, there never will be, there never can be, a more striking Appeal made, either to the common Sense, or to the good Sense of mankind, than when the following enquiry was proposed to their serious reflection, Matt. xvi. 26. What does this question most plainly intimate, but that, To gain *the whole world*, at the expence of the Salvation of the Soul, would be a Loss most fatal, irreparable, eternal? Who is there, that, in the best exercises of his Understanding, has any doubt of the truth of this proposition? But, where are the people, who are living and acting upon this obvious Principle? How ignorant, how irrational, how ruinous, every other kind of life!

" Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.
" This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave
" To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,
" The most ambitious, unambitious, mean;
" In triumph, mean; and abject on a throne.
" Nothing can make it less than mad in man,
" To put forth all his ardour, all his art,
" And give his Soul her full unbounded flight,
" But reaching HIM, who gave her wings to fly.
" When blind ambition quite mistakes her road,
" And downward pores, for that which shines above,
" Substantial happiness, and true renown;
" Then, like an Idiot gazing on the brook,
" We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;
" At glory grasp, and sink in infamy!"

FAITH,

is the cordial Belief of *the Truth*: of that Truth, to which particular reference has been made in a preceding definition: of that Truth, which is the very Basis upon which our TEMPLE is erected, and that connects every link in the golden Chain of that System, which we have taken leave to propose to universal attention, and acceptance*. Should our recommendation

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It was therefore well said by Clemens Alexandrinus—Η γνωσις ημων και παραδεισος ο πνευματικος αυτος ημων ο Σωτηρ υπαρχει. See too the apostolical estimate of this Object, in Phil. iii. 7—12. Were these things recorded for our benefit, and imitation? If so, what is become of the christian Character?

* There is no real opposition between Reason and Revelation, Faith and Science, Nature and Grace, when judiciously stated. Enthusiasm has misled some persons into as many extremes, in one direction; as Scepticism has, in another. Reason, as far as it can conduct us, and in relation to things within its province, is no blind Guide. We are not to shut our eyes, when we make use of a Telescope. It has its ne plus ultrà, no doubt; "hitherto shalt thou go, but, no further—and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Then it is, that Revelation

be treated in a style, it would be discouraging to anticipate, we shall, at least, have

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steps in, to supply the defects of the most exalted human wisdom; which, in these high matters, is comparative folly. If "the World by wisdom knew not God," is it any marvel, that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God?"

Reason and Faith, we have been told a thousand times, by men, at whose feet we ought to bow, in point of Intellect and Science, have their totally distinct provinces. Why should they not be carefully observed? why suffer them to intrench on each other, to the violation of propriety, and order? why transgress their rightful limits? Let Reason be permitted the privilege and honour to conduct us to the boundaries of Revelation: we are then consigned to the superior guidance of Faith. There we may safely rest, and enjoy the advantages of both.

Reasoning minds are propense to dwell in an undue degree on a philosophic Faith. They ought to know, that such an ideal abstracted sort of Faith is not so much as conceived by the bulk of mankind. How should it? Neither indeed is there any trace of it in the Scripture. Have all men philosophic Talents? Christian Faith is of a much higher class: and, if we would be ingenuous enough to investigate the subject, *without prejudice*, we should find, that, it is the Consent of the Heart, the Will, and the Affections, to "The Word of Truth"—accompanied, as it ever is, with emotions, dispositions, and character, suitable to the infinite importance of the things we believe. "The objections made to Faith are

the consolation of recollecting the old adage, which has supported many a superior Mind, In magnis voluisse, sat est. And, who will say, that we have not *attempted* great things?

GOOD WORKS,

intend all that diversity of christian excellencies, which belong to every distinct branch of practical Religion; and whose goodness is not determinable by the mere opus operatum, but, by the Principle *from* which—the Spirit *in* which—and the End *to* which, any given action of Piety or Virtue is performed. Non omne, quod micat, aurum est, is a maxim of great consideration, and utility, in this case: in the

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by no means the effect of knowledge, or penetration—but proceed rather from an ignorance of its nature: which ignorance has in numberless instances been detected even in those, who pass for Masters in this or that particular branch of knowledge." In a word—Human Science is the decided province of human reason; revealed Science, of Faith.

very sad and too frequent neglect of which, decipimur specie, we both deceive ourselves, and impose on others; we are weighed in the Balances of Truth, and Integrity, and are found wanting. Let us not despise a salutary hint, though it comes from the pen of an heathen poet, Teipsum concute.

Happiness.

As right Reason is the *discovery*, or perception of that, which is simply, absolutely, and invariably the best, and, as true Virtue is the sincere and ardent *pursuit* of it, real Happiness is the *enjoyment* of it. It is the Criterion of the greatest Good, of which the human Nature is capable. It cannot therefore consist in the utmost measures of Fame, Wealth, or Honour, attainable in this life *.

* What then is the perfection of the human Understanding? Right Reason. And, what is the perfection of human Nature? Christian Virtue. And, what is the perfection of human Life? Immutable Felicity. And, is

To pass over all the delights of Sense, as of the lowest rank, and merely animal—there are some gratifications to be derived from the study of the fine Arts; there are superior pleasures, which flow from the acquisitions of universal Science; but, for the truth, the perpetuity, and the sublime, of Happiness, we must betake ourselves entirely to what we denominate, Sapience—or, that Knowledge of divine things, which is always associated with a supreme Taste for them. For, it is an opinion of Cicero, and perfectly accords with the best understanding of every person, who thinks freely, that, "Such is the Man, as his prevailing Inclinations and Affections make him." 1 Cor. xv. 48.

Aristotle has a sentiment in his Ethics still more elevated; "For, whether," says he, "it be the very Mind of man, or some-

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not this a concise catechetical Summary of all Truth, and Wisdom? It is a Maxim, at least as old as Plato, that, Αληθεια εν ολιγοις εστι· In paucis Veritas.

thing else, that, according to nature, seems to govern and preside within us, as having knowledge of that which is most lovely and divine; or, whether it be God himself, that immediately operates; or else, those Gifts, which we derive from above; this is plain—that such inward working and conformity to Virtue's Law is that, which constitutes true Happiness."

" Pleasure, we all agree, is Man's chief good;
" Our only contest what deserves the name.
" Give pleasure's name to nought, but what has pass'd
" Th' authentic seal of SCRIPTURE—and defies
" The tooth of Time; when past, a pleasure still;
" Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
" And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes
" Our future, while it forms our present, joy.
" Some joys the future overcast; and some
" Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
" Consult thy whole existence, and be safe:
" That Oracle will put all doubt to flight.
" Be good: and let Heav'n answer for the rest."

And now, after having been detained so long in the Portico, let us enter

The Temple of Truth;

Καθως εσιν αληθεια εν τω Ιησυ.

Ps. lxxxix. 15—17.

THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH; &c. &c.

Ουδεν παρησω της Αληθειας επος.
Τι γαρ σε μαλθασσοιμ' αν ων ες υστερον
Ψευσαι φανημεθ' ; Ορθον η Αληθει αει. ANTIG. SOPH.

" All Truth is from the sempiternal Source
" Of Light divine. But Egypt, Greece, and Rome,
" Drew from the stream below. More favour'd we
" Drink, when we chuse it, at the Fountain-head.
" To them it flow'd much mingled and defil'd
" With hurtful Error, Prejudice, and dreams
" Illusive of Philosophy, so call'd—
" But falsely.——
" The only amaranthine flow'r on earth
" Is Virtue; the only lasting treasure, Truth.
" But, "*what is Truth?*" 'Twas Pilate's question, put
" To Truth itself—that deign'd him no reply.
" And wherefore? Will not God impart his light
" To them that ask it?—Freely—'tis his joy,
" His glory, and his nature to impart.
" But, to the proud, uncandid, insincere,
" Or negligent Enquirer, not a spark *."

WHEN a Person sits down to write, under the immediate and impressive con-

* A few notes, and poetic quotations, will be occasionally interspersed, merely for the sake of taking off the appearance of assuming the air of a Didactic, in these days of *free Enquiry*; and, to give an entertaining effect to serious disquisitions—so little in harmony with an Age of

sciousness of his being accountable to GOD for every thing, he shall advance—who can adequately conceive the pious solicitude of his feelings, lest he should advance any thing, dishonourable to the moral Governour of the world—to the Character of the Redeemer—or, to the divine Source and Original of all truth, purity, and consolation; and indeed, to the highest concerns of Mankind?

Under such impressions of moral responsibility, have I now taken up my Pen, with a professed DESIGN, to place together, in a concise and comprehensive Summary, all those distinct Articles of The christian Religion, which were "once delivered to the Saints"—which it is essentially necessary for us to know—and, which are intended to make us "wise," in a sense too generally disregarded, "unto SALVATION."

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unprincipled levity, and thoughtless dissipation. In this innocent way, it is a dictate of true, unaffected Benevolence, to "become all things to all men." The body of the work will be cloathed with that simplicity of style, which is best adapted to popular instruction; in the attached, or subjoined remarks, we shall be less careful of this matter.

For all the intelligence requisite to this grand purpose, of inexpressible magnitude, I apply not to human Reason—to vain Philosophy—or, to "the Rudiments of the world"*—but, to that wonderful Preceptor, super-eminently called,

THE BIBLE:

which, in the present case, I shall take for granted has been "given by the Inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness—that *The Man of GOD*"—a Character entirely different from *The Man of the world*—"may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work †."

* No two Writers I have met with, are better calculated to convince us of the extravagancies, into which human Reason is liable to wander, or of the vanity of human Philosophy, than *Reid*, and *Beattie*.

† Indeed, if this be *not* the Character of the Bible, and it be *not* sufficient for every purpose of Wisdom, Virtue, Truth, and Happiness, it were absurd, and irrational, to admit its divine Inspiration. "The Law of the Lord," in that case, is not a "*perfect*" thing; and, if we cannot

With this conviction, I have a sufficient apology, for asserting, that, were I possessed of all the various powers of Science, Learning, and Oratory, they could not be more nobly employed than in celebrating the transcendent excellency of The sacred Volume; as conveying to us the most exalted ideas of The glorious Godhead; as the sole Repository of revealed Truth; and, as the only Oracle of that Wisdom, which can "guide our feet into the way of Peace."

That I may be effectually secured from any deviation from this infallible Directory,

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derive every possible advantage of this kind from "The Oracles of God," where shall we go to supply their deficiency? or, how can we say, that, "the Darkness is past, and *the true light* now *shineth*," φαινει, splendet? Should the Reader wish to learn what views he ought to entertain of this Light—the estimation, in which it should be held—and the sublime taste, he ought to cultivate for it, let him study diligently the language, and sentiment, of Ps. cxix.

while I am prosecuting this great design, and preparing a rich

Compendium of Christianity *,

I shall keep my eye steadily fixed on the subsequent passage of the inspired Code; and shall endeavour to arrange its important contents in an order, so perspicuous,

* I know of nothing, that can apologize for the general inattention to this vast subject, when it is recollected, that every thing in the true nature and genius of Christianity—not in the false, mutilated, and corrupt editions of it—is adapted to promote the real Excellence, the substantial Good, and the unfading Glory, of MAN. But, when we say this, we consider him, principally, in relation to his rational Constitution—his moral Agency—and his eternal Destiny. Including all these particulars in the use of that complex term, we argue, that, Christianity has the highest claim to the most intense application of his mental faculties, when it is surveyed in all the different views, in which it is proposed to our acceptance; whether, as "The wisdom of God"; as, a grand Scheme of Redemption; as, the most sublime manifestation of all the divine Glories, and Perfections; as, the richest Display of Grace, Mercy, and Peace; as, a Spirit of universal Benevolence; as, "The one thing needful;" or, as "The whole of Man." I offer these, as a Specimen only of the surprising and attractive variety of mode, in which it invites our most serious regard; and to shew, that merely to glance at it, and not to contemplate it, in its integrity, in its completeness, is no less an act of Injustice, and Ingratitude, than of irremediable Injury to our immortal concerns.

and demonstrative, that their light may dart upon the mind, with as much facility, as the rays of the Sun upon the Organ of natural vision.

Ephesians ii. 8, 9, 10, 7.

Τῇ γὰρ Χάριτί ἐσε σεσωσμένοι διὰ τῆς Πίςεως καὶ τῦτο ὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν· Θεῦ τὸ δῶρον·

Ουκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μή τις καυχήσηται·

Αὐτῦ γάρ ἐσμεν ποιήμα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριςῷ Ιησῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς· οἷς προητοίμασεν ο Θεὸς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν.

Ἵνα ενδείξηται ἐν τοῖς αιωσι τοῖς ἐπερχομένοις τον ὑπερβάλλονται πλῦτον τῆς Χάριτος αὐτῦ, εν χρηςότητι ἐφ' ημας εν Χριςῷ Ἰησῦ.

" By GRACE are ye saved—through Faith: and that, not of Yourselves: it is the Gift of God:

" Not of Works; lest any man should boast:

" For, we are his Workmanship—created in Christ Jesus unto good works; which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them:

" That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his GRACE, in his Kindness towards us through Christ Jesus."——

The primary and most fundamental Truth, which obviously forces itself upon our notice, from this passage, may be expressed in these terms—

ASSERTION 1.

SALVATION IS BY GRACE.

Here then it will be incumbent on us to consider, what is intended by " Salvation;" to shew, that Mankind are not their own Saviours; and, to explain, how it is that they are " saved by Grace."

SECTION I.

What is Salvation?*

* We shall see presently, that this is a Question, which necessarily involves in it all that we mean by, what is Truth? what is Reason? what is Virtue? what is

To a person of the least proper reflection, it must be evident, that, the very idea of being "*saved*" implies, or presupposes,

Religion? and the like. Because, all the sublime pleasures of mental Satisfaction, moral Beauty, and true Glory, are contained in it. Every thing that is pure in Sensation, decorous in Self-love, noble in Ambition, delightful in Imagination, amiable in Sympathy, or elevating in Theology, assembles in this comprehensive idea, when it is scripturally analysed. We shall soon discover, in the prosecution of our present design, that, Salvation is, in fact, the Illumination of the Understanding; the Rectitude of the Will; the Peace of the Mind; the Joy of the Heart; the Grandeur of the Affections; the Order of the Life; and, in its ultimate issue, the perfect Consummation of all Blessedness. So that, whatever comparative value it becomes us to set on any intellectual Acquirements, which have no immediate connection with this—however highly the false maxims, the artificial manners, or the political institutions, of the world, may seduce us to estimate its Riches, and its Honours—every thing of this sort is utterly eclipsed, upon an impartial judgment, by the infinitely superior worth of, *Salvation.* The Pursuits of natural Philosophy, through all its numerous branches, have, no doubt, their appropriate charms: so have those, of polite Literature: you may add, if you please, the fine Arts: but, what are they, when compared with the far more exalted, and exalting investigation of *divine Philosophy*, and *sacred Lore?* which will lead us, gradually, through all the paths of heavenly

some antecedent State of difficulty, danger, and distress: or, in still plainer language, that those, who are saved, were previously in a lost estate—which rendered such Salvation expedient, and necessary. This, in the very nature and reason of things.

Regardless then of all the idle and illusive conceits of those, who chuse to wander uncontrouled in the regions of a lawless imagination, what do "The holy Scriptures" assure us the human Race have lost, by the fall of their first Parents, and the entrance of moral evil into the world? They uniformly represent us to have lost the *Image* of GOD, in which Man was originally created, and which constituted the true dignity of his nature; the *Favour*

Light, from the Origin of all things, to the winding up of this mysterious Drama; and, eventually, to the great universal Revolution in the history of Man! Here indeed is a Το πλατος, και μηκος, και βαθος, και υψος, which surpasseth knowledge.

of GOD, in which consisted his real happiness, and life; and the *Glory* of GOD, which, to say the least of it, must have contained in it the Perpetuity of both. In this view, he is exhibited to us as a lost Creature. A Creature, still possessed of vast capacities; but, like a magnificent Temple in a state of ruin, and only to be contemplated as an object of gloomy and desolate Grandeur *.

The inestimable value of the christian Salvation, can never be made apparent,

* Such was the dire effect
" Of man's first Disobedience, and the fruit
" Of that forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste
" Brought death into the world, and all our woe.—
" Man, disobeying,
" Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
" Against the high supremacy of Heav'n,
" Affecting Godhead—and so, losing all
" To expiate his treason hath nought left;
" But, to destruction sacred and devote,
" He, with his whole posterity, must die;
" Die he, or Justice, must; unless for him
" Some other, able and as willing, pay
" The rigid Satisfaction—death, for death."

MILTON.

but by this contrasted view of it; which corresponds with those dark shades in a fine painting, by which the brilliancy of the brighter colouring is thrown out. If we wilfully close our sight, either from Pride, Prejudice, Ignorance, Infidelity, or Vice, to the dangers and miseries of our lost condition, we never can discover either the beauties, or the blessings, of that Salvation, which unavoidably leads us to a retrospect of the State of sinfulness, or moral depravity—the State of guilt and condemnation—the State of wrath, and wretchedness, into which we are all, by nature, plunged *.

* Should this Idea, mortifying and humiliating as it may seem, be given up, not only are two-thirds of the sacred Writings sacrificed, but, one of their *most* distinguishing peculiarities is obliterated: which is the fact, in many of our modern publications on religious subjects: so that, in these times, we have a deformed species of *Christianity*, in which, the *principal* Features are omitted! In the place of which, we hear of an equivocal sort of Virtue, which nobody can comprehend—and of a high-toned Morality, which nobody can define.

In the whole System of the christian Faith, there is no Position more fundamental than that, which asserts the

To Beings in *such* a state, there is a Voice—a Voice celestial—more delightful to the ear of those, who are not "like the deaf adder," than the softest, sweetest strains of Melody—more enchanting to the soul, than all the joys of earth—which proclaims the glad tidings, of what? of

SALVATION.

This was the theme and song of the angelic Choir—the multitude of the heavenly host—when they descended from the mansions of bliss, to hail their incarnate God in the most lovely, benevolent, and condescending character of, "A SAVIOUR—which is Christ, the Lord*."

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entire Depravity of man: though few more generally, or more resolutely, opposed. Permit a single question on this point. Can they be taught by the same divine Instructor, who do not subscribe to the humble and ingenuous Confession of that great Character, which said, as in Rom. vii. 18?

* No person therefore ought to be accredited by us, as a Minister of Christ, sent forth by him to "shew unto us the way of Salvation," who does not direct us to HIM.

I am therefore speaking only the compendious sense of the whole *Book of God*—

And, for what? That we may be brought into a State of Salvation: or, that we may be actually delivered by Him, from all those miseries, which are the consequence of our apostacy from God, and be conducted to the possession and enjoyment of all those spiritual Blessings, the Fulness of which it hath pleased the Father should dwell in Him. Consult Gal. iii. Eph. i. 3. Col. i. 18, 19.

Should not the public Teachers of our Religion keep this *characteristic* distinction of the Scriptures principally and constantly in eye—that they are "The Word of Salvation?" And, why "the Word of Salvation?" Because, it gives an account of Christ, the Author of Salvation: and of the Salvation itself; that it is *great*, *perfect*, and *everlasting*: and of the Persons, who are interested in it: and because, it is not only the Mean of revealing it—but, of applying it, to them that believe. Rom. i. 16. The *Gospel* itself, strictly taken, is a pure Promise of Salvation by Christ: and, if a Man has a right understanding of this, he is in a capacity to be wiser, and better, and happier, than if he were intimately acquainted with the whole contents of the once celebrated Library of the Ptolemies in Alexandria. This is no bombast: it will stand the test of Reason, in its strongest exercise. Put it to the trial.

Sola Scriptura ultimum finem designat, nempe unionem cum Deo, et media suppeditans accommodata, viam sternit nunquam tritam ab humana prudentia. Sola imaginem Dei obliteratam instaurat. *Sola viam indicat ad Salutem.* Sanctis cogitationibus animum imbuit,

of which, this indeed is the great line of life—when I affirm, that SALVATION, is the complete Deliverance of Man from all the shame, the degradation, and the miseries, of his Fall from original righteousness, and felicity. It is his Deliverance from a state of moral depravity, of humiliating guilt, of eternal destruction, by the Restoration of his soul, to the *Favour*—to the *Image*—and to the *Glory* of GOD: all which are inseparably connected, by his sovereign Constitution, "who worketh all things after the council of his own Will."

From this very brief statement of what the simple dictates of The word of God, undisguised, and unsophisticated by any human alloy, oblige us to understand, by Salvation, I advance to the next link in this golden Chain*.

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frænat appetitus, Dei timore timorem hominum pellit, vehementiore animi affectu minores motus comprimens et quasi absorbens.

* Which, however unclassical it may be deemed, we suppose to deserve at least as much attention, as that,

SECTION II.

Mankind are not their own Saviours: they do not save themselves: they are saved.

Were it otherwise, and could Mankind, by any innate power or agency, recover the forfeited *Favour* of the divine Being—impress the *Image* of their Creator on their own spirits—and entitle themselves to a seat in his everlasting *Glory*, how much of what has been attested by Moses, and the Prophets, by the Evangelists, and the Apostles, might with the strictest propriety be expunged! Upon the admission of this impious falsehood, the most valuable part of what they have inserted might

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which the Grecian bard imagined to be suspended from the throne of Jupiter. All the movements of the divine Providence in the government of the world are indeed only so many links in that series of Events, which depend entirely upon the Διος βουλη, which he understood but blindly. Providentia Dei est Virtus divina rerum omnium gubernatrix, per quam Deus fines, et media ad fines, ab æterno præscivit et præordinavit, et ex arbitrio disponit.

very safely be considered as nugatory, and useless. But, God forbid! and let every thing fall down before the Reason and Philosophy of infinite Wisdom, as Dagon once fell at the approach of "*The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord.*"

The truth is—and, "Let GOD be true," but every Man, who shall be so daring, and presumptuous, as to contradict him, "a Liar"—we can none of us *save* Ourselves, in any degree, or measure; we can have no part, or lot, in this matter. And, why not? On account of our inherent and moral corruption: which, we are taught by One, who cannot be mistaken, and will never deceive, is so exceeding great, as to be compared to a spiritual death, or, a being "*dead* in trespasses and sins *:"

* It may be as well, to particularize here only a few of the most unequivocal Symptoms of this moral or spiritual Death, for the benefit of those, who chuse rather to indulge a spirit of Self-imposition, than to exercise that, of Self-inspection. Who, that does not know his own Heart, would expect to find there the radical semina of Avarice—Ambition—Blasphemy—Cruelty—De-

to which it is owing, that, instead of walking in the way of truth, of wisdom, of holiness, of virtue, and of peace, we have a prevailing tendency to "walk according to the course of this present evil world; to fulfil the desires of the flesh, and of the mind;" to become "the children of disobedience;" to gratify our inordinate passions, and inclinations; to be ensnared, and delighted, with all the vain allurements of time, and sense; and to sacrifice the riches, the pleasures, and the honours, which are unseen, and eternal, for those which are visible, and transitory.

To controvert this, upon any specious and evasive principles whatever, would be,

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ceit—Envy—Hatred—Hypocrisy—Injustice—Intemperance—Lying—Malice—Oppression—Revenge—Slander—Suicide—Vain-glory—Violence—and such like: all which have a direct tendency to the total subversion of every social, moral, and christian Virtue. Such however is the undisguised character of the human Heart. Jer. xvii. 9. Mat. xv. 19. The Son of Sirach seems to have taken a peep into this Cabinet, when he said, "Pride was not made for Man."

to controvert *a fact*, which is established by the testimony of universal History, and Experience *. And, to this *moral Depravity* must be ascribed, as an inevitable consequence, that *moral Weakness*, and insufficiency, which renders us incompetent to the performance, or business, of our own Salvation; which utterly incapacitates us for every thing of that kind; however active and ingenious we may be found in those pursuits, whether

* To those, who chuse to reason and philosophize on the subject, rather than to listen to the voice of Fact, and Experience, we recommend an invaluable work on "*original Sin*," by the late President Edwards: a Work, which professes, not only to elucidate and establish that doctrine—but, fairly to meet all the Objections, with which it has been attacked. As an uncommon specimen of profound and acute reasoning, it merits great attention. —The same thing indeed is represented with greater simplicity, conciseness, and decision, in Rom. iii. 10—19. If such clear assertions are not believed, the utmost strength of argument will avail nothing. As to any purpose of abiding impression, you might as well be employed in laying stripes on the sea. Why indeed should they regard the powers of Logic, or Learning, who slight the plainest dictates of heavenly Truth?

civil, social, political, or literary, which especially relate to the affairs of this life. Sad to say, in concerns of an infinitely higher order, and nature, the Scriptures have declared, that we are feebleness and impotency itself: their own phraseology is, that "*we are without Strength; we can do nothing—no manner of thing that is good**." How then is it possible for us to engage in so arduous an Undertaking, as that of *saving* Ourselves? of redeeming

* Those, who acknowledge the divine Original of these Scriptures, and yet are so inconsistent, as to maintain *the moral Ability* of fallen Man, and *the sufficiency of human Reason*, are called upon ingenuously to weigh the true import of such phrases; and not to sacrifice the Sacredness of Truth, at the shrine of their own Vanity, and Self-conceit.—"Say I these things, as *a Man?* or, saith not *The Scripture* the same also?" To that, I appeal. Jerem. xiii. 23. Matt. xix. 25, 26. John i. 13... xv. 4, 5. Rom. viii. 7, 8... 1 Cor. ii. 14... 2 Cor. iii. 5. We must be utterly impenetrable to every thing like christian Zeal, not to be shocked at the deliberate manner, in which those authorities are continually insulted, both from the Pulpit, and the Press. They are absolutely set at nought, by many, whose *Office*, and *Profession* it is, to establish them. Diruunt, mutant quadrata rotundis!

ourselves from the bondage of Corruption —from the curse of the Law—from the Wrath to come! The very Attempt, were it seriously made, might indeed have this valuable effect—to convince us of its folly, and madness; and so lead us, eventually, to Him, who is both "the *Author*, and the *Finisher*, of our Salvation."

For the more effectual establishment of this point—respecting our natural Inability to *save* ourselves—it should be observed, that, instead of having any constitutional propensity, to seek, or to desire, the blessings of Salvation, we are very strangely, very irrationally, very ungratefully, disposed to neglect them! we do actually, determinately, and perseveringly *turn away* our thoughts, our attention, our minds, our hearts, from them, to pursuits, possessions, and enjoyments, of an inexpressibly lower, and, in some instances, of the vilest, consideration—which we should blush to own. We are *disinclined*, to "seek first the kingdom of GOD, and his

Righteousness:" we do not *like*, to "labour for the meat, that endureth unto everlasting life:" we do not *chuse*, to "set our affections on things above, and not on things in the earth*." And, with all these *moral Aversions* from our supreme Wisdom, our true Excellence, and our chief Good, shall we still be so blind, so absurd, so infatuated, as to imagine, that we can *save* ourselves? Surely, nothing but the most pitiable ignorance, or, something worse, can ever indulge so delusive a chimera. No mathematical Axiom can be more incontestible, upon the principles of The christian Faith, than this—that, Mankind are not their own Saviours.

* This is no matter of speculative Theory, or sceptical Philosophy; but, of universal, unexceptionable Experience: and there never was a Person, who understood the nature of genuine Christianity, or that really knew himself, who would dispute it. But, Mankind do not *know themselves*, for this sole reason—because, they will not study themselves in the only *undeceiving* mirrour, "The Word of Truth." Rom. vii. 9—14. Those, who do not prefer to *read themselves* in the holy Scriptures, may consult a very useful little treatise on *Self-knowledge*, by Mason.

They are, therefore, "*saved**:" saved, by some superior Agency, and Power. They are saved by Him, who is the great prominent figure in the whole of divine Revelation; the spirit of all the ancient Prophecies; the substance of all the exceeding great and precious Promises; the perfection of the Law; the glory of the Gospel; THE GREAT SALVATION of all the ends of the earth; and, whom we have been accustomed to denominate, in one comprehensive title,

THE MESSIAH:

to whom, we must be indebted, by the irreversible decree of Heaven, for all our salvation. We must be *saved* by Him; because, "there is no Salvation in any other†."—But, in what way? or,

* Σεσωσμενοι: not, by the active energy of any inherent strength, but, by a passive submission to the Almighty power of divine Grace. Ps. cx. 3. In what mode that Grace operates, agreeably to our rational constitution, will hereafter appear.

† As this is confessedly a Topic of such general Interest, and concerning which the ancient Prophets are said

SECTION III.

In what sense are those, who are saved, saved by Grace?

In discussing these great questions, which come not at all within the sphere of

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to have enquired with the most anxious diligence, 1 Pet. i. 10—12. it would have been, at least, very excusable, had I expatiated upon it more at large. But, my aim is, to epitomise, as much as possible, without omitting any thing really material. Otherwise, I might have stated this *Salvation*, 1. as devised in the everlasting Covenant of Grace, or Counsel of Peace; 2. as revealed in the sacred scriptures: 3. as exhibited in the mediatorial Person and Character of Christ: 4. as applied by the holy Ghost: 5. as the only Source of true Felicity: 6. as a matter of substantial and improving Excellence: and, 7. as consummated in a future and eternal State. Let those, who are habituated to these sublime Researches, pursue it through all this diversity of representation. Their time and labour will be amply rewarded—if they pursue it in the pure word of God—unperplexed, and unobscured, by any human Commentary. I urge this with the greater earnestness, because, that ignorance of the divine Oracles, which prevails among us, is, to those, who are capable of being moved by it, inexpressibly afflictive.

It should however be acknowledged, that, from the tremendous period of national Crisis, in which "The

Science merely human, and in which the greatest Genius, when left to the operation of his own unassisted powers, is upon a level with the most illiterate child of poverty, we have no recourse to the schools of Reason, and Philosophy; because, we wish not to be led astray by their fascinating and perilous illusions. We go directly into the Sanctuary of divine illumination: in which, by an entire submission of our understanding to its unerring Light, we are instructed, that, The Religion of the Bible is altogether a Religion of GRACE; and that, The Salvation of

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Age of Reason" did irreparable mischief, the pious and judicious Laity have not had the same cause of complaint—which, previous to that publication, had so long existed—that, "From the Pulpit, Morality had been so earnestly recommended, and Christianity but coolly regarded; much said of the Light of nature, and the Fitness of things; but, little, of the great plan of Salvation—of "Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, or Redemption—and those sublime sentiments of Grace and Virtue, exhibited in the Gospel." Original Christianity seems to be reviving, once more, in all its uncorrupt and lovely Simplicity.

Man is, in every *scriptural* view of it, a Salvation of GRACE.

"BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED*."

The very moment you leave out this *most essential* position of the christian Verity, you may plead for virtue, and con-

* "All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
"As my eternal Purpose hath decreed.
"Man shall not quite be lost; but, sav'd who will:
"Yet, not of *Will* in him, but GRACE in Me,
"Freely vouchsaf'd: once more I will renew
"His lapsed powers, though forfeit, and enthrall'd
"By Sin to foul exorbitant desires:
"Upheld by *Me*, yet once more he shall stand
"On even ground against his mortal Foe:
"By *Me* upheld—that he may know how frail
"His fall'n condition is; and to *Me* owe
"All his Deliverance; and to none but *Me*."

MILTON.

Liberum arbitrium in malum per se solùm valet—in bonum, non nisi Gratiâ juvetur. Johan. vi. 44. Porró gratiam, quæ necessaria est ad conversionem, Scripturæ statuunt esse geminam; unam excitantem, quæ interna est, et opus est Spiriti sancti: alteram adjuvantem, quæ sic extrinsecùs agit, ut tamen interiora afficiat. Utramque gratiam dividunt in sufficientem et in efficacem: quarum illa dat posse—hæc, velle et agere: illa dat vires credendi et se convertendi—hæc, dat ipsum credere et actu converti.

tend for morals, with the most persuasive tongue of Eloquence,—or, with all the imposing solemnity of profound Erudition—but, the vital spirit of Christianity is gone. GRACE, is its *discriminative* characteristick: and, I am surprised, that this is not both perceived, and enforced, by all our public Teachers, with the utmost emphasis, and energy; since, to those, who study the pure word of God, it must, I should apprehend, appear to be the strongest outline in the apostolic ministry. St. Paul is full of it.

Should it be said—as there can be no real knowledge without clear ideas, and distinct perceptions—"but, what do we mean by GRACE?"—In the present instance, and to preserve the harmony of truth, it must be understood to signify the free, spontaneous, and sovereign Favour of "The God of all Grace, Mercy, and Peace"—totally and forever irrespective of all terms, conditions, or performances, on the part of those, who are

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the Objects of it. To define it in any other sense, would be, to contradict that first and unchanging principle of the sacred Oracles, we are now proving: and, terrible will be the fate of those, who are attempting to disguise, or to "frustrate, *the Grace* of God." For, what is it, but most profanely to oppose his *chief Design*, and *ultimate End*, in the Redemption of the world by Jesus Christ*!

* The most celebrated and ardent Preacher of this Doctrine, in the apostolical College, well aware of that Vanity, that haughty Self-confidence, which are so apt to swell the hearts of Men, does not think it sufficient barely to mention our obligations to the divine Goodness—but, again and again insists upon it, as a matter of the *highest importance* to be known and believed; and, therefore, he forces it, as it were, upon our consideration: he seems to have resolved, not to be misunderstood, and that nothing should be wanting, on his part, to convince us, that we are indebted *entirely* and *alone* to the free, unmerited Favour of God, in pardoning the sins of men, and admitting them to a state of reconciliation with Himself, for the sake, and on account of the Mediation, of Jesus Christ: and that, not only without any respect of, but, on the contrary, in direct opposition to, the good works, of which they might otherwise *boast*. What else could he mean, by stating this distinction with so much *accuracy*, and *particularity*, in Rom. xi. 5, 6?——After

But, that nothing may be left ambiguous, equivocal, or, obscure, on such a point, let us discuss it a little more in detail: let us ask, to what must we ascribe the original contrivance, scheme, or plan, of Salvation? And, we must be equally destitute of Reason, and Humility, to ascribe it to any thing, but the divine GRACE.

The method of Salvation, devised, and determined upon, in the Council of the Trinity, would have remained an eternal secret to us, had it not been revealed. To what then shall we attribute that superna-

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this, produce me, if you can, a Character *more profane*, and *blasphemous*, than the Person, who shall openly and calmly declare, that, the Salvation of Man is *not* wholly of divine Grace. For, what is the most precise idea of *Blasphemy*, but, to dishonour the Name, the Perfections, or the Truth, of God? Dicitur βλασφημειν, qui nomen Jehovæ transfigit; qui, quod Dei est, sibi arrogat; qui Dehonorem minuit. *Grotius*, et *Scultetus*. Such, in its utmost extent, is the complicated infamy of the character, which shall presume to say, that we are *not* saved by Grace!

tural Revelation, which has manifested to us this great secret of the everlasting Covenant? Are we so lost to all the feelings of modesty, and gratitude, as to attribute it to any thing but *the gratuitous Favour* of the most High?

Supposing too, that we ourselves have not only heard and read of this Salvation, but, that we have felt the virtue and power of it, upon our minds and hearts; that we are personally and experimentally acquainted with its nature and worth; is it possible, that we should ever forget our ineffable obligations to the divine GRACE? It is impossible. It is *impossible*, I repeat it, but that, if we have been translated from a State of depravity, guilt, and wrath, into a State of regeneracy, pardon, and peace, we should be ever ready to say, with a sensibility of soul, which no language can adequately describe,

"By THE GRACE OF GOD, I am, what I am *."

* How very rarely can we meet with public Teachers of our Religion, who breathe the modest and lowly

Never, therefore, let it be imagined—for, it is a vain imagination—that we can

Spirit of this eminent Apostle! And, how is this to be accounted for, but that, while they profess to instruct us in the true nature and genius of Christianity, they have no real impression of its Truth upon their own Minds, and Hearts. For, did they *indeed* believe, that, "by their innate Depravity, the Glory of man is defaced—his Understanding is darkened—his Will is corrupted—his moral Strength is wasted—his Affections are perverted—and, that he is reduced to a state of deplorable Misery, out of which he has no power to extricate himself, or of procuring happiness; did they *indeed* believe this, is there a moment, in which they would fail to celebrate *the divine Grace?*"—There can be no evangelical Humility, or Self-abasement, where this is not, of all possible themes, the most delightful. I adore it myself, as the first original Spring—as the perpetual Source—as the final Consummation—of the christian Redemption: and, I place every idea, that has a tendency only, to exalt a sinful creature upon the footing of his conditional worthiness, and recommendatory qualifications, in the same class with any the most daring Insult of the Perfections and Government of God: inasmuch as it *eclipses* the most sublime display of his Mercy, Love, and Truth, and the richest complication of all his gratuitous Favours to the children of men. "It is therefore no trivial Offence; but, includes in it an Enormity of guilt, baseness, and ingratitude; and, not seldom, under the pretence of peculiar attachment to virtue, and morals! which only serves to aggravate the Evil—by exalting human Excellence above the glory of divine Grace.

have a right understanding of the christian System, unless we most cordially embrace this doctrine,

"BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED*."

Whether this Παρρησια, this *Libertas loquendi*, this undaunted Freedom of delivering my Sentiments, be a Zeal without knowledge, or discretion, let the Scriptures determine.

* We humbly conceive this to be the only proper view, and meaning, of the following scriptural phrase, "The Gospel of our Salvation:" and, from which, the Galatians were departing, when the Apostle addressed them with so much ardour, solemnity, and decision, in Gal. i. 6—9. Assertions, like these, are not accommodated, it is true, to the reasoning Pride, the vain Philosophy, the false Candour, or the conceited Virtue, of sober Dreamers about religion, and morals: but, that they claim our serious attention, will not be disputed by those, who make a proper use of their reflecting Powers—after having read what almost immediately follows, in verses 10, 11.

The most plausible pretext, that has ever been offered, for the total rejection of this statement of the doctrine of Grace, or for the partial concealment of it, is, its liableness to perversion, and abuse. How much is it to be lamented that *such* Characters of delicacy, and caution, had not been consulted, when the Plan of Salvation was drawn, and the Revelation of it was made! How would *they* have improved the former, and have

Whatever opinions may be advanced, to the rejection of this primary maxim of

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corrected the latter! How much better would *they* have provided for the security of the divine Holiness, and the interests of Piety, than infinite Wisdom has done! Who can deplore enough, that *they* were not admitted to those counsels of Heaven, in which Arch-angels had no share!

To the argument, so often, and so ignorantly repeated, against the truth or excellence of a doctrine from the abuse, or perversion, of it, why should it be necessary to be for ever noting, that, Reason is *abused*; so are Talents of the highest order; so is Learning; so is Wealth; so is every thing, that is valuable, in the whole Creation of God. Would you therefore blot it out?—"The brightest manifestations of the divine Glory have been made occasions of dishonouring him. The ancient Heathens took occasion from the visible grandeur, beauty, and usefulness of the sun, moon, and stars, to worship them, instead of their great Original." Ought they therefore to be extinguished?

"In considering the actions and determinations of God, should we not distinguish between two very different sorts of consequences, that may follow upon them? 1st, Their true and proper effects—for which they are designed, and which they have a native tendency to produce: and 2dly, those indirect consequences, which may follow on them, not through any tendency in the things themselves to these evil consequences, but, through the perverse dispositions of others. Unless we adhere to this, we may plead for laying aside the use of all the

all true Religion—or, in which this is not the most striking feature—however specious they may seem, and though they come recommended to us by Authority, Learning, and Eloquence, they must, without any respect to persons, or charac-

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powers and faculties of human nature. As all moral evil consists in the *abuse* of some good natural powers, or in some inward depravity, which tends to such abuse, it is a common, and no less just, observation, that the abuse or corruption of the best things is the worst. Corruptio optimi pessima. If the rectitude of our affections, the due exercise of them, and of all the active powers of the soul in subserviency to them, were not of the highest importance, the abuse of those things would neither be so odious, nor so hurtful, as it is."

Much more might be easily added to the same convincing purport; but, is not this quite enough, to confound the nonsense and absurdity of those, who argue against the truth or the goodness of a thing, from the abuse of it? if indeed they *mean* to make a right use of their own Reason, and Understanding: which, it may be found, is not always the case. But, so long as Mankind continue to shut their eyes against the light of good Sense, and sound Logic, it is as benevolent, as it is magnanimous, to expose their folly—not to apply any harsher term. Prov. xxvi. 5.

Θεᾳ Χαρις με εσωζει.
Μη νυν ατιμα Θεον, Θεω σεσωσμενος.

ters, be abjured, detested, and abhorred: neither shall I hesitate to affirm, that they will be renounced, with a holy indignation, by all, who have any becoming regard for

"THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS."

"Learning itself, receiv'd into a Mind
"By nature weak, or viciously inclin'd,
"Serves but to lead Philosophers astray,
"Where Children would with ease discern the way.
"And of all Arts sagacious Dupes invent,
"To cheat themselves, and gain the world's assent,
"The *worst* is, Scripture warp'd from its intent."

ASSERTION 2.

SALVATION IS THROUGH FAITH.

Τιν' ημιν ηκεις τε Θεε φημην φερων;
Εσθλην.
Εστιν δε ποιον τοπος;
Ερευνατε, και ορατε.

"Oh how unlike the complex works of Man,
"Heaven's easy, artless, unincumber'd Plan!
"No meretricious Graces to beguile—
"No clust'ring Ornaments to clog the pile—
"From ostentation, as from weakness, free,
"It stands, like the cærulean Arch we see,
"Majestic in its own Simplicity.
"Inscrib'd above the portal, from afar
"Conspicuous as the brightness of a Star—
"Legible only by the light they give—
"Stand the soul-quick'ning words--BELIEVE, and LIVE.*"

THE great Theme, upon which our intellectual powers are now employed, is a matter of the highest consideration to our purity, peace, and perfection, as Beings created for an eternal state. If it be

* Ω Διος αδυεπης φασις,
Αμφι σοι αξομενος.

viewed as of secondary importance, either it is not understood, or, it is treated with neglect and contempt. We may affect the interests of Morality, and we may plead the cause of Virtue*; but, there can, in fact, be neither the one, nor the other, without it. There may be the name, and the profession; but, there cannot be the substantial *Thing*, upon the principles of divine Revelation.

In the discussion of this immortal Theme, it has been made appear—not in a style of declamation, or superficial essay,

* Notwithstanding the numerous disquisitions upon these interesting subjects—to which the writer has been in a long and constant habit of paying the closest attention—he may confidently affirm, they are most of them fundamentally defective—in not contending, that, there can be no *christian* Morality, or Virtue, but upon *Principles*, and *Motives*, purely *christian:* of which, both ancient and modern Philosophy appears to be equally ignorant. Not but what Morality, upon any principles, however selfish, and worthless, is a great political good—and, as such, should be encouraged. A nation of Immoralists would constitute a second kind of Hell.

which proves nothing; but, of reasoning, and argument—that,

The whole human Race, as virtually represented in their original Progenitor, are, by nature, and with respect to the Favour, the Image, and the Glory of God, in a lost condition*: that,

Mankind are not their own Saviours; they cannot save Themselves; they have no natural ability, no moral sufficiency, for this vast undertaking; they must, therefore, be indebted to some superior agency for their Salvation: and that,

* A person must excel in the most subtle art of torturing truth from its plain and obvious meaning, who can extract any other interpretation from Rom. v. 12—19. I would ask any man of an honest mind, and a sound understanding, whether this passage does not obviously import, and clearly assert, that the whole human Race are involved in the *Sin*, *Guilt*, and *Condemnation*, of the first Disobedience. An ingenuous Infidel, would, I think, very readily admit, that this is the unsophisticated sense of the words, however he might deny the truth of the doctrine. It may indeed be questioned, whether such a character as an *ingenuous* Infidel can exist.

If ever we be saved, we must be saved entirely by GRACE; that is, by the free, unmerited, and sovereign Goodness of "The God of our Salvation." It must be *wholly an Act of Grace**.

* These great leading Theses of Christianity are not seen, or acknowledged, because, they are neither regarded, nor studied, by the generality of people of any class. The most intelligent in all other branches of Literature are frequently the most ignorant in these matters. "To study a thousand vain and unprofitable things, and never to learn *how to be saved:* to load the memory with a great multitude of heathen names and the history of profane and impious Characters, while we are totally ignorant of that of *Jesus Christ:* to dispute about some critical trifle, and not to attend to *God himself* in the affairs of eternity: to strive incessantly about the letter of the Law, and not to be at all solicitous about *the spirit* of it: this is almost an exact description of the employment, in which innumerable persons spend their life, who are called "*the learned men*, and *the wits*, of the Age!"—Is not a remark, which was uttered some centuries ago, too well adapted to our own times? Surgunt *indocti*, et rapiunt cœlum.

The contemptible affectation of uncommon Learning, uncommon Ideas, uncommon Systems, and uncommon Language, lest we should be thought to judge, or to speak, according to the principles and style of common sense, has done infinite injury to the cause of Truth, Science, Philosophy, Religion, and Virtue: not only in respect of a few conceited Individuals, but, to the public Mind.

After having *demonstrated*, as we hope—for, demonstration is our plan—these fundamental positions of the christian Verity—we proceed to the establishment of our next *Assertion:* for the confirmation of which, we mean to explain *the peculiar Nature* of that FAITH, through which we are saved, and its *Instrumentality* in our Salvation. What then is,

SECTION IV.

The peculiar Nature of the Faith, through which we are saved?

Most of the controversies, by which the minds of men have been agitated, and perplexed, with respect to the doctrine of *Salvation by Faith*, have originated, either in a want of clear ideas in the use of the terms, or, from not understanding the true scriptural nature of *Salvation*, and *Faith*. Whenever these are properly comprehended, the dispute will terminate: a consum-

mation most devoutly to be wished; "that we may all speak *the same thing*, and be perfectly joined together in *the same mind*, and in *the same judgment* *."

* Is it not greatly to be lamented, that any persons, professing either goodness of heart, or benevolence of mind, should argue, that this *Unanimity* is impracticable, and utopian? What! when there is only one Lord, *one Faith*, one Bible, and one Hope? What! when the very thing is so strongly, and so repeatedly urged upon us, in the sacred Code? What! when Truth, as such, must be in harmony with itself—and when nothing would tend so much to confound both the sceptical and infidel Opposers of Christianity?—Can any thing be more gratifying to *them*, than the perpetual controversies, and collisions, which subsist between the avowed Followers of one and the same divine Teacher; unless it be, the most unamiable bitterness, with which those controversies are usually conducted? Immortal honour would certainly be due to that Character, which could devise a method of putting a final close to these polemical disputes. Few Politicians would deserve a *Monumentum ære perennius* half so much. I would cherish the possibility of the thing, in the hope, that some exalted Mind would make the Attempt. Might it not be a proper Thesis for the *Teylerian* prize-essays? or, for a series of Lectures from the *Bamptonian* School? Surely we have some pious and learned Theologists among us, who might be ably and happily employed in so noble a service. The very Effort would be its own reward; and the subject, if I mistake not, rather new,

A moment's reflection will be sufficient to convince an ingenuous Enquirer, that nothing can be true, which contradicts itself. If, therefore, it be true, that *Salvation is by Grace*, it is mathematically certain, that any definition, or account, of *Faith*, which opposes this invariable maxim, must be false, and to be rejected with virtuous abhorrence—as derogatory to the *Glory* of the divine Grace. For, we are assured, upon apostolical testimony, that, "Salvation is of *Faith*, that it might be by *Grace*." Nothing therefore must be inculcated, or interwoven, in the constitution of Faith, as the Instrument of our Salvation, which can have the smallest tendency to eclipse the splendour of that *Grace*, which is to blaze forth in the whole scheme of our Redemption, and in every distinct branch of it.

This however is no task for any secondary kind of Being: it will require the first Mind, and Talents of the first order.

As I mean not to move at all out of the circle of the inspired Records, in what I now advance, I observe, that, in those sacred pages, *The Faith*, by which we are saved, is stated to be

A Principle of the Heart.

" For, with *the Heart* man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*." I

* How often have we been told, and with the most correct propriety, *Qui benè distinguit, benè docet.* This indeed is the very essence of sound Logic; and, the most effectual method, that can be taken, to confound both a Sophist, and a mere Declaimer. I deem it right then, to observe a clear distinction between the Reason of Faith—the Philosophy of Faith—and, the Grace of Faith: because, I have known many living instances of modest, humble, and pious Christians, who have actually possessed the last, whose minds would be extremely harassed, were you to address them upon the philosophical rationality of Faith. Their Faith is nevertheless the highest Reason, *because*, it consists in " the belief of the Truth." 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. Fides, hic notat assensum Veritati alicui præbitum, non propter rei evidentiam, sed propter testimonium Dei; qui quum suprema Veritas sit, eo ipso est *αυτοπιστος*. John iii. 33... 1 John v. 9, 10.

" The Light they walk by, kindled from above,
" Shews them the shortest way to Life, and Love:

should therefore judge it proper, and safe, to express myself upon this point, as follows.

The Faith, by which we are saved, is that *gracious Principle*—or, if you prefer the phrase, as more fashionable, though unquestionably less evangelical, that *christian Virtue*—by which we not only embrace all "The Scripture, which has been given by the Inspiration of God," but, more especially, that part of it, which re-

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" They, strangers to the controversial field,
" Where Deists always foil'd, yet scorn to yield,
" And never check'd by what impedes the wise,
" *Believe—rush forward*—and, *obtain the Prize.*"

And yet, Christiana fides non est stupentis animi cæca obstinatio; sed convictio rationalis, per lucem divinæ Revelationis; quâ animus undique illustratur. We have never read in the book of Revelation, that the grace of " Faith cometh" by reasoning, or philosophizing—but, " by *hearing:* and hearing, by the word of God." Have the goodness to turn to Rom. x. 8—17. 1 Cor. i. 17—21. Optima igitur est Confessio Anglicana 1645; Fidei præcipui actus sunt, acceptare et recipere Christum, et in eo *solo* acquiescere ad justificationem, sanctificationem, et vitam æternam, virtute fœderis *Gratiæ.*

veals to us the divine Plan of Salvation, or, God's determined Method of saving lost mankind.

With respect to the most discriminative peculiarity of this Faith, it may be thus represented. It is a gracious principle, of *Refuge;* by which, we betake ourselves to the proper Object of salvation. It is a gracious principle, of *Trust;* by which, we confide in Him. It is a gracious principle, of *Dependence;* by which, we continually rely upon Him. It is a gracious principle, of *Affection;* by which, we are said to "cleave to Him with stedfastness and full purpose of Heart." And, it is a gracious principle of *Joy;* by which, we triumph in Him, as "the Author and the Finisher, both of Faith and of Salvation." As it is written, "God forbid, that I should *glory*, * save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

* To my philosophical perceptions this single term, *glory*, thus applied, necessarily includes in it all the pre-

Observe the vein of Scripture, when speaking on this subject; and a very little becoming attention will serve to convince you, that all the leading *Faculties*, and *Passions*, of the human Soul, are involved, as it were, in this evangelical Grace, and actuated by it, when once it is implanted in the *Heart*. And, that you may perceive how intimately it is connected with our first Assertion, [Salvation is by Grace,]

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ceding ideas. I *glory* in this Object, and in the great Work of Redemption consummated by Him, who bowed his sacred head upon *The Cross*, because, I fly to it—I trust in it—I depend upon it—and I cleave to it with delightful Adherence—for my entire Salvation. The Authority for so high a degree of cordial Exultation must be sought for in the inspired Oracles.

" Hear the just Law, the judgment of the Skies!
" He, that hates Truth, shall be the Dupe of lies.
" And he, that *will* be cheated to the last,
" Delusions, strong as hell, shall hold him fast.
" But, if the wand'rer his mistake discern—
" Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return—
" Bewilder'd once, must he bewail his loss
" For ever and for ever? No—THE CROSS:
" There, and there only, though the Deist rave,
" There, and *there only*, is, the *Pow'r to save.*"

COWPER.

I need only annex these few remarks: which, for the greater simplicity, shall be offered in a way of Question, and Answer.

What is that, which Faith principally eyes, as to the great concern of Salvation, in the person of the Father? It is the *Grace* of God, as the eternal Fountain, Source, and Original, of that Salvation.—What, in the person of the Son? It is, "the *Grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ—who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor; that we, through his poverty, might be rich;" rich, in "Wisdom, in Righteousness, in Sanctification, in Redemption:" for, "it hath pleased the Father, that in Him should all Fullness dwell: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

What is it, again, upon which the eye of Faith is principally fixed, in the person of the eternal Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father, and the Son—and without whose secret, efficacious Influence, we

must be for ever "alienated from the life of God?"—It is, upon the *Grace* of the holy Ghost.

Enough, then, I presume, has been submitted, to shew those, who, laying aside every corrupt and wilful prepossession, are disposed to learn what is the scriptural nature. and most distinguishing peculiarity, of that *Faith*, which whosoever hath shall infallibly be saved; and, destitute of which, there can be no deliverance from the wrath to come*.

* Let the nature and genius of this Faith be fully understood, as it is every where delineated in the inspired pages, and it will be seen, that it may be possessed by those, who have never read any learned Essays, either upon the external and internal Evidences of the christian Religion, or, upon what has been called, its Reasonableness.

Upon this conviction the great Pascal was led to say, "Never think it strange, that illiterate persons should believe without reasoning. God inspires them with the love of justice, and with the hatred of themselves. 'Tis he, that inclines their Hearts to believe. No man ever believes with a true and saving Faith, unless God inclines his heart: and no man, when God inclines his heart, can

In this fastidious Age of reason, philosophism, levity, and excessive refinement, it may be thought a superfluous tautology; but, Truth and Salvation are not to be sacrificed either to the philosophical niceties, the classic elegance, or the learned follies, of this world, when they erect their impi-

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refrain from thus believing. Inclina cor meum, Deus, in testimonia tua.

"That some men believe, without having examined the proofs of Religion, is, because they enjoy a Temper, a Frame of mind, altogether pious; and because, what they hear affirmed by our Religion is agreeable to that Temper. Those, whom we see commencing *real* Christians, without the knowledge of prophecies, or the like evidences, do yet judge of their Religion, no less than the Masters of that knowledge. They judge of it, by *the Heart*—as others judge, by *the Understanding*. God inclines their heart to Faith: and his Grace is the most effectual conviction."

I certainly should not have ventured to introduce so *unphilosophical* a sentiment in this place, but that I flatter myself the name of *Pascal* will be sufficient to shield me from the ridicule, insult, and contempt, of the most abandoned Infidelity, as well as from the scoffs of reasoning Pride: and, between these, where *Truth* is the object of attack, the line of partition is scarcely discernible. The Pharisees were, of the two parties, more inimical to the Son of God than the Sadducees!

ous crest in opposition to "*The Oracles of God.*" I shall repel their insolence with the disdain, they provoke, and go forward with my design to impress, what I conceive to be,

SECTION V.

The real Instrumentality of Faith in our Salvation.

For, though much has been already adduced, which has indirectly elucidated this interesting matter, there is, in some, such a slowness in comprehending, and, in others, such a rooted, not to say, unconquerable aversion from the imperious dictates of heavenly Wisdom, that, both repetition, and detail, are, in many cases, absolutely requisite, to convey the most important instruction*.

* The writer has had great opportunities of remarking this, among almost every rank and description of persons: among whom, he has met with the most astonishing proofs, that, whatever literary advantages we may enjoy, so long as we are destitute of the special Grace of heaven, it must still be said, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Ανθρωπος ψυχικος opponitur regenerato. He has heard men of superior talents,

I mean not, however, to go into a tedious exposure of all the various mistakes, delusions, and errors, which have been entertained by those, who, instead of adhering to the purity of christian Doctrine with an humble spirit, have "rejected the Counsel of God against themselves." If I cannot dissipate the clouds of darkness, by the simple light of divine Truth, I forbear to adopt any other method. This is my Aim. The Issue, I must submit to "the Father of lights, and the God of the spirits of all flesh."

Disgusted, as I have long and often been, with every manner of expression, which can at all obscure the brightness of *divine Grace* in the Salvation of Man, and which is so horribly frequent in our day, I here introduce my most solemn protest

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and of extensive knowledge, in other respects, betray the grossest deficiency of information on sacred topics! he has heard them, under the profession of Christianity, talk absolute nonsense, as well as egregious error!

against the impious and sacrilegious use of *Terms*, *Conditions*, and *Recommendations*, as antecedent Requisites to our being personally interested in the Salvation, which is in Christ Jesus*. In the direct

* Should the Reader be seized with any sudden and pious alarm, at such a declaration, as if it were prejudicial to *practical* Religion, let him exercise that *candour*, and *patience*, which are no contemptible branches of it, till he is acquainted with the writer's complete System—and then, it is presumed, his alarm will totally subside. "Judge nothing before the time." We recommend it to minute Philosophers, not to nibble at distinct parts; but, generously to take in *the grand whole* of Christianity.

It may indeed be said, "But how are we to express that Repentance, Faith, and new Obedience, which all agree are necessary to form the christian Character?"—To preserve the harmony of Truth, with respect to the divine Grace, I would call them, in the pure language of sacred Writ, "*the Things which accompany Salvation*;" its Concomitants, its Adjuncts, some of its constituent parts. Thus, Repentance is that part, or adjunct, of Salvation, which relates to our penitential views of Sin; Faith, that part, or adjunct, which relates to our entire, unceasing Confidence in the Redeemer; and new Obedience, that, which pertains to the universal tenor of our Conduct. They are all however equally the Gifts, and Blessings, of divine *Grace* and *Mercy*. Acti, agimus. They are not the *Preliminaries*, but, the *Consequences*, of this Grace and Mercy.

view of my awful responsibility to the Judge of quick and dead, I feel it incumbent on me to affirm, that such language is *unscriptural*, *antichristian*, and *abominable*, from whatever quarter it may come: and, by those, who have thoroughly digested the contents of St. Paul's epistle to the Galatian churches, it must be held in inexpressible detestation*.

To discountenance every idea of the kind, The Scriptures will justify me, I am persuaded, in asserting, that, in the great business of our Salvation, Faith is nothing more than an humble *Recipient* of its countless and invaluable blessings: of

* Their pious Zeal for the Cause of God, and the Purity of his Truth, will assail such corrupting phraseology, as indignantly, as this Apostle did the Perverters of the Gospel. Gal. i. 6——9. . . iii. 1——29. What sort of treatment would such a public Teacher meet with in *our* day? Who would not either pity, or condemn, *such* doctrine? But, 2 John. 9, 10, 11. Our business is with *Truth*, not with *Men*. They are fallible; this is divine, immutable, eternal. Far be it from us, to make any sacrifice of the divine Verity to those, who *mean well* in opposing it! Acts xxvi. 9, 10, 11.

which, Jesus Christ himself is the complete All *.

* Fides illa cui Salutem addicit Deus, ea est fiducia in Christum crucifixum Servatorem meum, quâ totum *recipio* Christum, exclusis omnibus rivalibus, ad Justificationem, Sanctificationem, et Gloriam : recumbens in ipsius merita, plenitudinem, potentiam, et curam, ad illud omne suâ viâ perficiendum, quod ipse promisit, et quo ego indigeo.— Atque hæc *genuina* Ecclesiæ reformatæ sententia est.

It is not difficult, I presume, to conceive how such a Faith may be wrought in the human Mind without the advantages of a liberal education, or any considerable powers of reasoning. It has been stated already, that, Non tam ratiocinationum subtilitate, quam divinæ illustrationis valentiâ plerumque fides gignitur. Multa enim quotidie occurrunt exempla fidelium, quorum fides affectuosissima, et consolationis ac sanctificationis feracissima est; quæ tamen nec originis suæ modum, nec firmitatis suæ rationes, argumentando probare, nedum adversus cavillantium calumnias tueri valeat. Verùm in istis hominibus agnoscendus est lucis divinæ fulgor, qui, veritates illas quibus assentiuntur undique circumsplendens, mentem in earum meditatione insignitèr figit : licet facultatem eas ex principiis suis educendi, et cum sequelis suis deducendi, non ita largiatur.

The sufficiency of the Scriptures alone to produce, instrumentally, all that Faith, which is essentially necessary to Salvation, is most clearly attested by Jesus Christ himself, in Luke xvi. 31. Let this encourage people to consult the Scriptures for themselves, and not to give

In the exhibition of this most illustrious and wonderful Gift of the divine Mercy to the children of men, "all spiritual blessings in heavenly things" are proposed to our *Acceptance*. The Bible reveals them. The preached Gospel proclaims them. Both of them announce to us, in the name and on the authority of the most High,

The Pardon of Sin—
Justification unto Life—
Peace with God—
Adoption into his Family—
The Renovation of the holy Ghost—
Joy unspeakable—
A Hope, full of Immortality—
Glory everlasting—

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implicit credit to every public Teacher, who may, peradventure, need teaching himself. John iii. 10. "One, who trusts to a false Guide, is in greater danger of being led astray, than he who trusts his own eyes, though he should be indifferently acquainted with the road."—There is apostolical authority for saying to the meanest capacity, that can comprehend what is here advanced, "Judge ye what I say." It requires not a profound Intellect, but an honest Mind.

through the Sacrifice, Mediation, Righteousness, and Intercession, of the Redeemer of the world. Col. ii. 3, 4, 8—10.

Such, in a very compendious catalogue, are the blessings, which constitute our *Salvation*, for both worlds; and which, the christian Religion has set before us, in the Person, the Character, and the Offices, of

THE MESSIAH.

What then is the special province, use, and operation, of *Faith*, with respect to all these inestimable blessings, of Grace, and of Glory?—Cordially to *receive* them—as they are *freely* proposed—and, nothing more. Only to wait upon God, in the way, which he hath sovereignly appointed, that we may come into the actual possession, and, at last, into the eternal enjoyment, of them, through "the Redemption which is in Christ Jesus."

To confirm, what has been now stated, by the unerring testimony of sacred writ, instead of reciting the passages, at large, I shall only refer to such, as may be digested at leisure.

Romans	3.	19——26.
	4.	14—16; 23—25.
	5.	1————21.
	10.	1 ——13.
Galatians	2.	15——21.
	3.	1——29.
Philippians	3.	3——9*.

* The writer avows, that he has two powerful reasons, for not inserting those passages at length. 1. Because, he wishes to excite in his Readers the habit of consulting the Scriptures for themselves: and, 2. Because, he is afraid, that the work would extend beyond the limits he has prescribed to himself. His great object is, to render it as concise, as perspicuous, and as comprehensive, as he possibly can; without any omission, that can justly be censured as a defect. His original intention will not be answered, if every thing be not found in this Temple, which is sufficient to render those, who look into it, παρακυπτωσι accuratè introspiciunt, "wise unto Salvation." He aims not to be ingenious, or elegant: but, he has some ambition, to be useful.

It would be to insult the understanding, and heart, of any ingenuous Searcher into these scriptures, to suspect, that, after authorities so explicit, and so full, he could still deny that the Salvation of man is entirely of GRACE, through FAITH, as the instrumental Cause, or Mean.

Let this then serve to teach us, why the grace of Faith is placed by the apostle Peter at the head of all the Graces; and, why he has celebrated the "*Preciousness*" of this virtue, above every other *. What

* The preciousness of Faith, is a phraseology, which must sound very uncouth to the fastidious ear of our modern Literati, in every department of Science. Indeed, the Doctrines of Faith and Salvation are entirely out of their meridian. "The Carelessness they betray," said a great and benevolent Mind, "in an affair, where their person, their interest, their whole eternity is embarked, rather provokes my resentment, than engages my pity. Nay, it strikes me with amazement: 'tis a monster to my apprehension. I speak not this, as transported with the pious zeal of a spiritual and rapturous devotion. On the contrary, I affirm, that, the Love of ourselves, the interest of mankind, and the most simple and artless Reason, do naturally inspire us with these sentiments; and that, to see thus far, is not to exceed the sphere of unrefined, uneducated man."——PASCAL.

indeed can be so precious to those, who know how to make a just estimate of things! What can be so precious, as the Instrument, by which, the immortal soul is beautified, enriched, and felicitated, with all the blessings of Salvation; by which, it becomes interested in the atoning Sacrifice, the perfect Righteousness, the everliving Intercession, and the unimaginable Glories, of our great Redeemer! What folly, to suppose, that the whole earth can make us any adequate amends

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To us, who belong to that class of *Weaklings*, which think there is no *real* dignity in human nature, nor in any character, but what it derives from *true* Religion, it is a matter of much lamentation, that it is so rarely blended with the pursuits of human Literature. Many, who are proud of being thought, and known, to cultivate a taste for the latter, and to excel in such attainments, would blush to be reported of as *pious*, and *devout*. They have too much mental refinement to declare themselves Infidels; but, they have no objection to give this indirect sanction to Infidelity. Will it be reprobated, as illiberal, should we doubt whether such persons have either Grace, Faith, or Virtue? Whenever they have a moment to spare, from the study of the *belles Lettres*, and the *fine Arts*, it may not be mispent, if they will peep into Mark viii. 34——38.

for the want of a Treasure, so precious, as this!

Such is the prodigious importance of this Grace, in the history of true Religion, that, the whole life of a Christian is denominated from it, *a Life of Faith:* for, it is repeatedly asserted, "Now the Just shall live by Faith."

As to the Blindness of those, who do not discover *the moral excellency* of this Faith, by which we are saved, it is almost too wilful to be compassionated. For, are they so shockingly ignorant, as not to have read, that, it "worketh by Love?" that, it "purifieth the Heart?" that, it "giveth the victory over this present evil World?" and that, it sanctifieth the person, who is possessed of this vital Principle of all christian piety, and morals, in spirit, in soul, and in body*? Is it possi-

* He must be a Novice indeed in the holy Scriptures, who knows not, that I might shew, at large, what can

ble, they can call themselves the Disciples of the Son of God, and not have discovered the great things, which Faith can both *do* and *suffer*, from what is recorded of the Worthies, and Heroes, whose illustrious example is set before us, in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews * ?

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only he hinted, for his improvement, that, it is the peculiar property and province of the Faith, here celebrated, to clothe the subject of it with unfeigned Humility—to yield the highest possible Honour to the Redeemer, in his mediatorial Character, and Undertaking—and to exalt the Holiness, the Justice, the Wisdom, the Veracity, the Mercy, and the Grace, of God, *more* than it is in the nature of any other christian virtue to do. And yet, this is not the reason, why it saves. It saves, not as an Agent, but as a Recipient: not, for what it *does*—but, for what it *receives*. John. i. 11, 12. . . iii. 35, 36. Col. ii. 6, 7. I have no other solicitude for the preservation of these distinctions, but as they tend to secure *the harmony* of sacred Truth: and why may not I be as anxious about that, as *learned* men are about a particular *reading* in Homer, Plato, or Virgil? I am vain enough to think, that, in this instance, my labours are as *dignifying* and *honourable*, as theirs.

* We mean not, however, to insinuate, that every Christian is required to do, or to suffer, exactly the same things; but only, that the particular Grace, of *Faith*, is

Whether, therefore, we are contemplating the *Nature* of Faith—the *Instrumentality*, *Use*, and *Operations* of Faith—the *Preciousness* of Faith—the *Life* of Faith—or, the *moral Excellence* of Faith *—I defy all the wit and wisdom of man, to propose to his own heart a Question of

the vital Principle, from which every thing of this sort proceeds; though our Situations, Circumstances, Constitutions, and Characters, may, in some respects, be infinitely diversified. Every man, who is sincerely devoted to the Cause of God, and Truth, may not possess the meekness of Moses—the patience of Job—or, the Zeal of St. Paul; no, nor even the boldness of a Luther—the honest Simplicity of a Latimer—or the pious Gentleness of a Melancthon. Eph. iv. 7. Non omnia possumus omnes.

* One of our ablest philosophers has remarked, that, "not only in most of our intellectual operations, but, in many of the active principles of the human mind, Belief enters as an ingredient. Joy and Sorrow, Hope and Fear, imply a belief of good or ill, either present, or in expectation. Esteem, Gratitude, Pity, and Resentment, imply a belief of certain qualities in their objects. So large a share has Belief in our intellectual operations, in our active principles, and in our actions themselves, that, as Faith in things divine is represented as the main spring in the life of a Christian, so belief in general is the main spring in the life of a Man."—This analogy may deserve attention, and is calculated to remove prejudice.

greater magnitude, and interest, than this,

"HAST THOU FAITH?"

Beware then of all the perilous illusions, on this great point, by which thousands have been deceived, who have never yet found their way into "*The Temple of Truth.*"

"Before whose adamantine Portals, large,
"A troop of lovely *Graces* waiting sit
"In comely order: oft dismiss'd to earth
"On high employment, by the sovereign King.
"FAITH in the radiant circle *first* appears:
"A royal Stole her princely shoulders spreads,
"Impurpled deep in blood; and in one hand
"A book she holds, inscrib'd, THE WORD OF GOD.
"The other, fastly clasps a CROSS—on which,
"Immoveable, her earnest Eye is *fix'd**."

* In every iconological system, Faith has been very properly represented by the figure of a Female, with *a modest air*—never assuming the self-sufficient and conceited aspect of Reason, and Philosophy—dressed *in white robes*, and standing *on a Rock*. In her right hand she holds *a Chalice*; and, in her left, *a Cross*. The white robes, and modest air, denote Lowliness, and Purity: and, as Faith is placed the first, in the order of theological virtues, the Figure is exhibited on a Rock, in allusion to the solidity upon which the christian Faith is founded. The Chalice is a distinctive mark of Faith, as the richest Source of *consolation*; and the Cross is the established Sign of the christian Religion.

" To Man the bleeding Cross has promis'd all;
" The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace:
" Who gave his life, what grace shall he deny?
" O ye! who, from *this* Rock of ages, leap,
" Disdainful, plunging headlong in the deep—
" What cordial joy, what consolation strong,
" Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,
" Our interest in the Master of the storm!
" Cling *there*, and in wreck'd Nature's ruins smile;
" While vile Apostates tremble in a calm *."

* For, if Faith be the vital principle of all excellence and peace, Infidelity must per contra be the very reverse; that is, the vital principle of all vice and misery. It militates with an equal momentum against all virtue, and all bliss: and this is no contemptible apology for what is recorded of the late Dr. Johnson. " The settled aversion he felt towards an Infidel, he expressed to all ranks, and at all times, without any reserve. For, though on common occasions he paid great deference [alas!] to birth and title—yet, his regard for *Truth*, and *Virtue*, never gave way to meaner considerations. We talked of a dead Wit one evening, says his Biographer, and somebody praised him—" Let us never, said he, praise talents so ill employed. We foul our mouths by commending such Infidels."—Allow him the *lumières*, at least, intreated one of the company—" I do allow him, Sir," replied Johnson, " just enough to light him to hell."

This may perhaps sound very harsh, and uncouth, to the exquisitely delicate ear of modern Candour, and classic Taste; and we shall be told, that, " such a style of speaking, or writing, is a gross and illiberal way of abuse—foreign to the Character of a good Writer, a Gen-

tleman, or Man of worth." How well such a charge comes from an Infidel, who could prostitute superior talents to turn every thing sacred into ingenious Ridicule! For my own part I should deem Cicero's indignant address to Catiline perfectly adapted to such *Conspirators* against the Honour of God, and the true Happiness of Man. I see no advantage, that Society has derived, from treating them with the politeness due only to Goodness, and Truth. It is confounding the distinction, which ought to be carefully preserved between Virtue and Vice. And, why should not those, who use no reserve in the insults they pour on Christianity, be told, in a manner equally undaunted, what every wise and excellent man must think, that, "The surest and most established mark of a light and frivolous mind, of a weak and limited *Reason*, or an ill-formed *Heart*, incapable of real elevation and dignity of soul, is that, of finding nothing which strikes, which astonishes, and which interests you, in the sublime Doctrines of Jesus Christ?" Why should we pay this benevolent Respect to persons, "who appear as if they would be delighted, that a Religion, which is the glory of our nature, should prove false; and who are less touched with that load of overpowering proofs, which are brought to establish it, than they are with a discourse, which opposes it, and which is only remarkable for the boldness of its impiety and blasphemy?" They may be objects of our compassion—but, how can they be estimable?

ASSERTION 3.

THE FAITH, BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED, IS NOT OF OURSELVES; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD.

" What Pearl is that, which rich men cannot buy;
" Which Learning is too proud to gather up—
" But, which the Poor, and the despis'd of all,
" Seek, and obtain—and often find unsought?
" Which, while it gives us worth in God's account,
" Depreciates, and undoes us, in our own?
" Tell me—and I will tell thee, what is FAITH.
" God never meant that man should scale the skies
" By strides of human wisdom. In his works
" Though wond'rous, he commands us in his WORD
" To seek him rather—where his Mercy shines.
" The Mind indeed enlighten'd from above
" Views him in all: ascribes to the grand CAUSE
" The grand effect: acknowledges with joy
" His *Manner*, and with rapture tastes his *Style*."

IT is impossible, in the nature of things, that any distinct branch of human Knowledge should be scientifically understood, unless we are previously acquainted with its leading Principles. And, in matters of infinitely higher concern, though we may have some vague and general ideas about

the christian Religion, we can have no luminous conceptions of its sublime System, unless our Judgments are clearly informed, as to its first and most essential Positions; which may be considered, either as the Basis of this grand superstructure, or as the Root of all its various and beautiful ramifications *.

* All Men, of common sense, and reflection, as well as the ablest Philosophers, unexceptionably agree, that, it is certain even to demonstration, that every branch of Knowledge must be the result of some first Principles, or Axioms: and that the strength, or the weakness, of any deduction, will always correspond to that of the Principles on which it is grounded. It is indeed in vain to reason with any man, who is either ignorant of, or who denies, the first Principles, on which the reasoning is founded. If that Ignorance be voluntary—and, what is more frequent? it is a moral evil: if it be obstinate, the evil is aggravated to a great extreme.

From the closest attention, I have a capacity to give, to the sacred writings, and in the most deliberate exercise of my understanding, I am satisfied, that all the *Assertions*, which form the Basis of this work, may be denominated self-evident Propositions of divine Revelation. They are the same, in my estimation, as Lord Bacon's *Regulæ philosophandi*, or Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, were in theirs. To depart from them, is, according to my conception, to depart from Christianity. Should I speak

Upon this plan, therefore, we have so far proceeded in our Compendium: not

with confidence, it will be, because I speak from conviction. I am no friend to fluctuating Instability in these high matters. A man may safely begin, with *doubting*, as a great Philosopher is said to have done; but, it is no proof of his wisdom, to *end* there: "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of THE TRUTH." Εκαστος εν τω ιδιω νοϊ πληροφορεισθω: whereas, a sceptical Indecision seems to be classed among the Virtues of the present Age! Rom. xiv. 5.

Certain it is, we shall have no moral integrity, no unshaken steadiness, no virtuous consistency, of character, where the first Principles of Truth are not imbibed, and retained. "Theology and Ethics may now be considered as a Science, founded on maxims of indubitable reality: maxims, which, if they are not as much regarded, are *entitled* to, at least, an equal regard with the axioms of the schools—*the Maxims of Scripture.*" Such are those primary truths of Christianity, which are here proposed, not so much as points to be disputed, as first Principles: and we think we have a right to require them to be acknowledged as such. We have laboured to present them in their fullest light, in all their original simplicity, that they may be the more clearly discerned, by those, who do not chuse to play the fool in the concerns of Religion and Morality; that is, to determine, without having thought—to resist the brightest evidence—and to be angry, for no better a reason than, because they are told the truth: which is not seldom the case with many a strenuous

upon the problematical conjectures of human Reason, and Philosophy, but, upon the more solid rock of inspired Truth: taking it for granted, that the Revelation, we have implicitly followed, as our Guide, is of divine Original; and, that the *primary* object of this Revelation is, to inform the human Race *how they are to be saved:* which renders it not more a Revelation of the infinite Wisdom, than of the infinite Benevolence, of the Godhead.

We began then, with proving the *Necessity* of that SALVATION, which the Scriptures have proposed to our acceptance, and with explaining its comprehensive *Nature:* we proceeded, with shewing, that, in every proper view of it, it is a Salvation altogether of GRACE; and, we have seen, that the one instituted *Mean*, by which alone it can be received, and

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Advocate for the wonder-working powers of human Reason! We have a world of such Fools. Erasmus has given us some of their Portraits in his "Praise of Folly."

enjoyed, is, FAITH; more especially, as it depends upon the mediatorial Character, Undertaking, Offices, Sacrifice, Righteousness, and Intercession, of the great Redeemer of mankind. Because, Faith is the particular *Instrument*, by which we are said to come to Him—to receive Him—and to be united to Him—for all the purposes of present and of everlasting Salvation. John iii. 16——18, 35, 36. 1 Pet. i. 3——12*.

In elucidating the next *Assertion*, we have pledged ourselves to establish, ac-

* Our immortal Poet has stated this very scripturally, where, speaking of The Messiah, he represents a celestial Messenger expressing himself thus, to our great Progenitor, and Representative—

" The Law of God exact he shall fulfil—
" Both by Obedience, and by Love: though Love
" Alone fulfil the Law: thy punishment
" He shall endure, by coming in the flesh
" To a reproachful life, and cursed death:
" Proclaiming life to all, *who shall believe*
" In his Redemption: and, that his Obedience
" Imputed—becomes theirs *by Faith:* his merits
" To *save them*—not their own works."

MILTON.

cording to the most connected order of sacred Verity, it will be obligatory on us, to prove, that saving "Faith is not of Ourselves;" and that, "it is the Gift of God:" both which are necessarily implied in the preceding Assertions; they inevitably flow out of them. For, were it otherwise, and we could produce this Faith in our own hearts, we should in effect be our own Saviours, and we could not be said to be "saved by *Grace**."

* I cannot give up the idea myself, that most of the mistakes, which are entertained on these matters, originate, first indeed, in a want of paying them due consideration; and then, from not viewing them in their regular order, and connection. "The good effect of such a *systematical* distribution, has been seen, of late, in our systems of Zoology, Botany, and Mineralogy. The Talent, of arranging properly, is entitled to a high degree of praise. There is indeed an intrinsic beauty in arrangement, which captivates the mind, and gives pleasure, even abstracting from its *Utility:* which is its principal excellence. As in most other things, so in this particularly, Nature has joined beauty with utility." The formation of such Systems, therefore, ought to be esteemed according to the importance of the subjects, which they contain. "It were even to be wished, that, upon all occasions, the general Terms applied in them should be so accurately defined, and so systematically arranged, as

SECTION VI.

Saving Faith is not of Ourselves.

Very great stress is to be laid here upon the epithet, *saving*. For, it will not be contended, but that there are many persons, who indulge a kind of Faith, which carries with it no satisfactory evidence whatever of its being accompanied with Salvation. There is much counterfeit Faith current in the world; which, it becomes us to arrest in its course, and to examine, very accurately, by the only infallible Touchstone—*The Word of God.*

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that they might, *if possible*, be free from all ambiguity." This indeed is hardly to be expected, while the disinterested love of Truth is so rarely to be found.

" Many truths however there be, and those the most evident, and important, which never come under the consideration of some minds, or have been but badly or imperfectly represented to them, which, if fairly stated, and fully proposed, might be as readily assented to, as the eye distinguishes colours"—unless indeed in those too numerous instances, where some corrupt obstacle intervenes.

For, "every man's work shall be *tried*, of *what sort* it is:" how much more, his Faith*!

* We have observed many persons, of superior Understanding, liberal Education, classical Learning, and avowed Advocates for the christian Profession, who were no more acquainted with the peculiar genius and character of that Religion than an idolatrous Hindoo, or Hottentot! How is this to be accounted for? They have never made Christianity their Study—their Object. Therefore, they have no *clear Apprehensions* of its Fundamentals: how then can they have any *sound Judgment* of them? much less any of that *intelligent* and *solid Faith* in them, so remarkably defined in Hebr. xi. 1. as the υποστασις, the *Substance*, of things hoped for: and the ελεγχος, the *convincing demonstration*, of things not seen." When their Faith comes to be examined, it will be found nothing more than the general profession of a Religion, they never took the necessary pains to comprehend. How would they be ashamed to profess the Cartesian or the Platonic philosophy, with as little knowledge of the Systems!

The Science of Christianity is to be read, and studied, as well as any other Science—in order to be understood. We must become acquainted with the distinct meaning of its prominent *terms*; with its first *principles*; with its discriminative *doctrines*; with its peculiar *genius*, and *character*; and, with its essential *requirements*. Otherwise, we are no more likely to enter into its real nature, than the blind man did into that of colour, when he said, it was like the sound of a trumpet.

To excite our alarm, in this case, and the more effectually to place us on our guard against the danger, to which we are exposed, we are apprized, that, the Devils have their Faith; that "they believe, and tremble;" but, not to their Salvation. Neither is it at all an uncustomary thing, for multitudes, who are not yet consigned to the hopeless regions of sorrow, and of woe, to enter into the courts of the Lord, and there publicly to profess their Faith in the persons, perfections, and glories, of the supreme Being, who are as destitute of the Faith of which we are now treating, as those, who have never heard of the Faith of Christ.

Of the peculiarities, and properties, of this Faith, something has been faintly hinted already—when it was observed, that this is the Grace, by which we affectionately embrace the Record, and the Life, which God has given us in his Son Jesus Christ: by which, the Heart is pu-

rified: and, by which, we are enabled to rise superior to all the allurements of the world, that would otherwise seduce our chief regard from "*The one Thing needful.*" This is the Grace, whose energy is so surprisingly powerful in the soul, as to dispose us to look down with a pious indifference and contempt on all the Riches, the Pleasures, and the Honours, of this transitory Scene, when compared with "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus." No wonder then, if it be called, with an emphasis of superlative distinction, "THE FAITH OF GOD'S ELECT*."

* "It is reported of the Crystal, that it has such a virtue in it, that the very touching of it quickens other stones, and puts a lustre and beauty upon them. This is most true of FAITH. Faith is a Grace, which gives strength and efficacy to all other Graces: it is like a silver thread, that runs through a chain of pearl; it hath an influence on all other graces in the Soul. Faith is as the Spring in a watch, that moves the wheels. For, we love, as we believe: we hope, as we believe: we rejoice, as we believe: and we repent, as we believe: all other Graces keep time with this."—Nothing, but Pride, Ignorance, or Inconsideracy, will oppose this statement.

No other Faith than this can with any propriety be understood, when we are assured, that, "It is *not of Ourselves.*" And, in what sense is it "*not of Ourselves?*"—Where a mistake may be attended with everlasting peril, our caution cannot be too nice, and apprehensive. It is prudence, if not wisdom, to be extremely anxious. In this temper, let us enquire how it is, that the Faith, by which alone we can ever be *saved*, is "not of Ourselves."

No mathematical axiom can ever be clearer to my understanding than this position—that, we can know nothing of the nature, and qualities, the use, or the cause, of saving Faith, any

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True it is, that Reason may collect together considerable stores of Learning from every quarter; it may understand the Scriptures, critically, in their original tongues; it may argue, logically, in their defence; it may methodise their prophetic parts, with great perspicuity, and illustrate them with every figure in Rhetoric. But, there is in the meanest *true* Believer an higher and

further than as it is revealed*. To us, therefore, it can be of little consequence what Men of superior Reason, Learning, or Philosophy, have advanced on this matter. Our concern is not with them, but, with GOD, and his WORD: and, why should we apply to any other quarter for the information, which That is fully sufficient, and expressly designed, to convey†?

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diviner Light; a something above all human Reason, and speculative Science, which they never can attain. What is asserted of the Γνωθι σεαυτον, may, with no less truth, and propriety, be said of that—E cœlo descendit.

* Such Investigations exceed all the limits of human Intellect, unassisted by heavenly Light.

" So thick a Veil
" Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
" And dark in things divine.
" But, if his WORD once teach us—shoot a ray
" Through all the Heart's dark chambers, and reveal
" Truth undiscern'd but by that holy Light;
" Then, all is plain."

† For *the Sufficiency* of Revelation I profess myself a strenuous Pleader. It is my firm belief, that all the essential Truths of Religion lie within the reach of people of the meanest capacities—if they will take the proper pains to examine them, and use the pious means, to under-

In consulting that infallible Preceptor, I am taught, that no possible exercise of my own *unaided* faculties, nor any literary advantages whatever, unaccompanied by a divine Agency, can produce in my heart "The Faith of God's elect." Not that this is intended to supersede the necessity, or to deny the utility, of a christian Edu-

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stand them. The common people ought to be told this, to excite and encourage them to search the Scriptures for themselves. For, there are false Teachers, as well as true—and blind Leaders of the blind; of whom they should be carefully warned—and reminded at the same time, that the Scriptures alone are able to make them wise unto Salvation. 2 Tim. iii. 14——17.

With such a Master to instruct us, shall we apply for salutary knowledge to the schools of human wisdom? With the Oracles of God in our hands, shall we listen to the ambiguous responses of human Reason? With such a Comforter, Counsellor, and Guardian, shall we seek a Remedy for the evils of life, or a Refuge from the terrors of its conclusion, from those Retailers of opinion, who represent the former, as without any effectual Consolation—and the latter, as compensated by no succeeding Scene Shall we exchange certainty, for doubt—truth, for error—the treasures of wisdom, for the scanty supplies of darkling Intellect? We have seen, that, whenever people desert this Preceptor, they suffer themselves to be seduced by any Miscreant, who possesses the Talent of writing in a lively and fascinating Stile.

cation. For, " it is not good that the mind be without Knowledge." And, if the knowledge of men and things, of arts and sciences, be valuable, how much more that, which is of an infinitely higher class, and of endless worth!

There are, I am aware, who will carry the powers of Reason to such an extent, as, without any modest, pious, or even cautious regard to the testimony of God himself, to maintain its inherent capability to generate that Faith, for which we are now contending. So long as Reason shall preserve its own province, and limits, far be it from us to degrade what remains of the dignity of man, by diminishing its due estimation: but, the very moment it would intrench upon the dictates, and prerogatives, of *the supreme Reason*, or, *the Authority* of Heaven, there is no degree of indignation, with which it does not deserve to be protested *.

* In how many writers of great celebrity for Erudition, and Zeal, in defending Christianity, as a supernatural Revelation, might it be shewn, that, while they are bear-

In reply to those, who have aimed to exalt a certain idol of their own imagination, to which they have given the name of *Free-will*, and which, they would persuade us to believe, is perfectly competent,

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ing the ablest Testimony against the *pride of Reason*, in Infidels, they are encouraging the same thing, in another view, in themselves! building up with one hand, what they are destroying with another. Pride is Pride, whether it be in an Infidel, or in any other character: and, as to the *Fitness*, or *Propriety*, of what a Revelation, coming from heaven, should, or should not be, every man has an equal Right to judge: for, to presume to form any judgment at all, is the very superlative of Arrogance. What an amazing degree of inattention to the *infinite* wisdom, and majesty, and glory, of the Godhead must such Arrogance betray! and how much more would it become us to look up to him, and say, "Teach my best Reason, Reason." For, after all, may it not be said to the most exalted Genius, Job. xi. 7——12. Upon the very same principle that we assert the *incomprehensibility* of the divine Nature and Perfections, we maintain that, of his Purposes, Ways, and Conduct. Who art *Thou* then, that shall dare to bring them to be tried at *thy* Bar? Piteous reptile! learn to understand, what thy boasted Reason ought to satisfy thee, that the Proceedings of the Godhead are right, and wise, and fit, not, because they appear so to thy shallow comprehension, but, because they are *his*. Matt. xi. 25, 26.

without the aids of divine Grace, and by its *self-determining* energies*, to exercise every virtue, and every excellence, which is requisite to our Salvation, this is so completely to reject the whole tenor of "The Oracles of God," as to commit the most unqualified blasphemy. It is a total subversion, so far as the daring impudence of language can effect it, of the doctrine of divine Inspiration; and, the most charitable mode of interpreting such language, is, to place it to the account

* If those, who contend for the self-determining Energies of Man, mean to argue for an inherent Power, by which he can determine himself, both to *will*, and to *do*, such things as be rightful—how far such a doctrine may be rational, or philosophical, let others decide: I aver, that no position, however gross, or profane, can be more contradictory to the Scriptures—more effectually subversive of the whole Scheme of Redemption, which they reveal—or more repugnant to every idea of *divine Grace*, which they instruct us, universally, to entertain. Under these circumstances, my Reason requires me to pronounce it a fatal error: if not atheistical, certainly anti-christian: and, how any person, who has studied the operations of his own mind in these great matters, can possibly indulge it, on any other principles than those of Pride, Vanity, and Conceit, is to me inexplicable.

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of Ignorance, extremely to be pitied—but, not at all to be excused*.

But, if Pride and Prejudice should be resolved, against the fullest evidence of inspired Writ, to adhere pertinaciously to their own delusions—to put an end to this dispute, let them fairly consider what

* This perhaps may be censured, as violent, and illiberal. But, during the period, in which the apostle Paul was resident in the city of Athens, it may be recollected, that, instead of being struck with the beauty of its Architecture—the reasoning and eloquence of its Philosophers—or the cultivation of the fine Arts; for which he had no doubt a sufficient taste; his spirit was stirred within him, when he beheld their ignorant superstitions. A person, who wishes to breathe the same sublime spirit of pious Benevolence, must be in some degree affected, as he was, when he sees so large a majority in this land devoted to every thing but christian researches. Ought not this to be accepted as some plea for that warmth occasionally betrayed in these discussions? It certainly does not enter into the writer's *Design*, to give intentional offence "to the Jew, to the Gentile, or to the church of God." He would sacrifice every thing to the pleasure of pleasing, but Religion, Truth, and Innocence. As these are the Pillars of Heaven, and the only radical Foundation of all sublunary bliss, they demand not merely the exertion, but *the ardour*, of all our faculties, talents, and affections. Gal. i. 10.

is the real nature, and what are the peculiar operations of saving Faith, and then let them *try*, by the united efforts of Reason, and Free-will, to produce it in their own Hearts. Let them *try*, with penitential humility, with cordial affection, with gratitude unfeigned, and with the obedience of love, to create this vital Principle within themselves: let them *try*, to purify their own Hearts, and to resist the countless temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. In making the attempt, we have no doubt of their conviction, that, their Faith is "*not of Themselves:*" that so beautiful a Flower will never spring out of Nature's rank soil; that it is some foreign Plant—some spiritual Exotic*. For,

* At all events, and however it may terminate, it would be very *rational*, not to lose a day in making an experiment of such importance. To delay, where so much may be at stake, is a kind of *moral Insanity*—with this exception indeed, that the guilt of such a conduct is as great, as the consequences, which may peradventure attend it, are destructive. If you are this *self-determining*

SECTION VII.

Saving Faith is the Gift of God.*

Notwithstanding the perspicuity, with which this affirmative is made, it is hardly

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Agent, be at least so much your own Friend, as to determine to act in favour of your own excellence, and bliss.

* I cannot help being shocked for the state of that man's mind, who hesitates, for a moment, to acknowledge, that all the inclusive blessings of Salvation—whether they respect Grace, or Glory—are divine *Grants*, and *deeds of Gift*, ex certa Scientia; ex mero Motu; et ex Gratia speciali. He can neither know the Scriptures; nor God; nor Himself.—Prejudice may call this the language of Dogmatism: it is intended only for that of full persuasion: neither is it said, to gratify any personal vanity, or conceit; but only, in the hope of exciting serious enquiry. There is a certain insipid tameness, in speaking on these topics, which comes "in a questionable shape," and is much more likely to act as a soporific, than to rouse the attention. I am no Friend to the "softly speak, and sweetly smile," in matters of such high concern! We have too many Orators of *that* stamp. The times require a Boanerges, or a second Luther: that Luther, of whom the pacific, learned, and pious Melancthon, his cotemporary and intimate Friend, has left the following testimony—the language, not of fashionable politeness, or servile flattery, but, of truth and integrity. "Pomeranus," said

credible how much it has been perplexed, and perverted! as if Mankind were eager to display their ingenuity, or rather, their

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he, " is a Grammarian, and explains the force of words: I am a Logician, stating the connexion and arguments: Justus Jonas is an Orator, and speaks copiously and eloquently: but, Luther is a MIRACLE among men. Whatever he says, whatever he writes, *pierces into the very soul*, and leaves wonderful things behind it in the *hearts* of men."

The downy pillows, the gentle lenitives, the uncorrosive emollients, the convenient cordials, always near at hand, which the moral Physicians of these *enlightened* times provide for their patients on each sabbatical revolution, are most naturally calculated to lull their immortal Spirits to soft repose; till—oh! ye worse than savage Insensibles, the horrors of eternal delusion shall awaken them from the soothing, momentary delirium, into which these merciless Opiates have cast them. Yes—the time will come. Therefore, look to yourselves, ye misguided hearers; and be more alarmed at these gentle, lenient, lethargic Compounds, which too frequently conceal a deadly poison from your undiscerning sight, than at the sound of that tremendous thunder, which means only to terrify you out of all the infatuating visions of a vain Deceit. Accept this friendly notice from an invisible Spy, and no anti-christian Observer—before the moment arrive, when *the Trumpet of God* shall otherwise rend every nerve in your frame, with anguish, for which there is no remedy—with torture, which shall never have an end.

subtilty, and sophistry, in obscuring the simplest truths. Let us not however be so absurd, as to waste our time, in wandering through the mazes of their errors, and contradictions; but, with the sacred pages before us, let us ingenuously enquire, how this "Faith is *the Gift* of God."

You have read, it may be presumed, that "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."—So that, the word of God is the medium, through which this Grace is conveyed into the heart. But, from whence does it "*come?*" "Do not err, my beloved Brethren, says one of the Apostles—every good Gift, and every perfect Gift is *from above*, and cometh down from the Father of lights."

You have read, it may be, in another passage, of "the Faith, which is of *the Operation of God*;" not, of Education—not, of Reason—not, of Free-will—"*not, of Ourselves*"—but, of supernatural Agency,

For, can any thing short of this be intended by "the Operation of God?"

There is indeed an additional passage, which carries this idea so far, as to teach us, that the divine Power, to which we are indebted for this inestimable Gift, is similar to that, "which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead:" it is called, "the *exceeding greatness* of his Power*." The Objects of Faith are made known to us by divine Revelation, and

* Το υπερβαλλον μεγεθος της δυναμέως αυτε εις ημας τες πισευοντας, κατα την ενεργειαν τε κρατες της ισχυος αυτε,
Ην ενεργησεν εν τω Χριςω, εγειρας αυτον εκ νεκρων.

If ever the Apostle seemed to labour for terms, to convey the strongest impression to the mind, of that almighty Power, by which we are enabled *savingly* to believe, it is in this language. Every additional word is designed to give increasing emphasis, and strength, to what he is stating. Who, that has the least pretensions to critical acumen, can forbear to remark the ισχυς, the κρατος, the ενεργεια, the υπερβαλλον μεγεθος, supereminens magnitudo; abundanter, supra modum.

It appears then, that, as in all the works and wonders of Creation, and Providence, so, in those of Grace, and Redemption, the whole Power is to be ascribed unto God. Eph. iii. 20, 21. Jude, xxiv. 25.

are made credible by the complicated Evidence, which God has been pleased to afford us; but, that we believe to *Salvation*, and obtain it through Faith, is entirely owing to divine Assistance. Every thing is so ordered, that the whole shall be of GRACE*.

Much more soothing, as it may be, to the pride of the human heart—a circumstance, which alone is sufficient to render any doctrine suspicious, and repelling—to plead the cause of what is generally intended by Free-will, and Self-determination, we certainly may venture to inscribe on this view of things, Tutissimum est: it is the most safe; because, it is the most humbling.

"Ὁ Θεος, αρ' ε παντα τα οσια επιθυμηματα, παντα τα αγαθα βελευματα, παντα τα εργα δικαια απορρει—what occasion have we for thy gracious and perpetual Aid, if we have a Free-will, to dispose us to that, which is good, and a self-determining Power, adequate to the performance of it? In that case, what necessity can there be, that "thy *Grace* should *always prevent*, and *follow us?*" or, that it should work in us, and with us, effectually "to *will*, and to *do?*" Luke, xi. 35.

* "Unto you it is given, εχαρισθη, *gratuitously given*, to believe. Phil. i. 29. The same word is used in Rom. viii. 32. . . . 1 Cor. ii. 12. where, it is most properly translated, "*freely delivered*, and, *freely given*." For, χαριζεσθαι significat, præter meritum, imo contra quàm

Under the impulse then of that universal Benevolence, by which every hu-

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quis meritus sit, ex gratia donare; vel, in gratiam alicujus facere. And that *the Faith*, of which we treat, is one of the fruits of this Grace, ought certainly to be a settled point with those, who will compare Acts xi. 21, and 23.

It may perhaps be said, that, according to our representation of Faith, Reason has neither part nor lot in the matter. But, this is a misconception. For, what is the Light of Nature—but Reason, instructed, and illuminated, by the works of nature? And, what is the Light of Faith—but Reason, instructed, and illuminated, by the word of God, and the inspiration of his Grace? In both cases, you perceive, Reason is only a Recipient: or, an intellectual Capacity to admit instruction, and illumination, *ab extra*. We may perhaps have spoken of it, as a *Judge:* but, like every other Judge, it must be properly informed, and suitably enlightened, respecting the things, which come under its examination, or, that pass in review before it—in order to pronounce a just sentence.

Nothing, above a pitiable Enthusiast, would treat the light of Reason, and Nature, so long as it preserves its own limits, with neglect, or contempt. But, what must he be, who is not happy to acknowledge the vast superiority of the light of Faith? or, that supernatural Illumination, by which we discern divine things in a spiritual way. The light of Reason, whatever it may discover of God, and his eternal power, is at a much greater distance from him, to say the least, than that of Faith; and, though a little of him may be seen by the former, in the

man Being ought to be governed in the occupation of their respective talents, I may be allowed to intreat you would make this grand Question an article of immediate and particular *Self-examination.* Connecting together all that has been submitted under the present Assertion, few questions can possibly be of greater import than this, with which I have closed a former section—and which I now repeat—

"HAST THOU FAITH?"

" Descending from the skies
" To wretched Man, the Goddess in her left
" Holds out this world—and, in her right, the next;
" Supporter sole of Man above himself:
" Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,

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works of Creation, and Providence; how much more does the latter perceive, in the word of Revelation! "Reason," as one says, "digging in the letter of Scripture, arrives only at *the form of knowledge*, Rom. ii. 20. but, when the light of Faith comes, there is *sound wisdom*, or, as the original word is, *the essence*, Prov. iii. 21. a thing, which can no more be made up of mere notions, than a body can of shadows."

"She gives the soul a soul that acts a God*.
"*Salvation*; and, by *Grace*; by grace, through *Faith*;
"Here is firm footing: here is solid rock:
"This can support us: all is sea besides;
"Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours.
"His hand the good Man fastens on the Skies—
"And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl."

* Ταυτ' αν, τεκνον, φρονησον.
Ευ σοι φρονησας, ευ λεγω: Το μανθανειν
Δ' ηδιστον ευ λεγοντος, ει κερδος λεγει.
Οσω κρατιστον κτηματων ευβελια.

2 Thess. i. 11, 12.

* This may be thought a bold and unwarrantable kind of expression: but, without the licence we usually grant to poetic imagination, is it not in some measure authorized by those passages of sacred writ, which ascribe an almost omnipotence to the grace of Faith? Do they not tell us, that, "with God all things are possible," and in the same breath, "that, all things are possible to him *that believeth?*" Nay, and do they not represent Faith itself as acting by the Strength, or Power of the most High? What think you of Eph. vi. 10, 16?

ASSERTION 4.

SALVATION IS NOT OF WORKS, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST *.

" Man, on the dubious waves of Error toss'd,
" His ship half founder'd, and his compass lost,
" Sees, far as human optics may command,
" A sleeping fog—and fancies it dry land;
" Spreads all his canvass, ev'ry sinew plies,
" Pants for it—runs at it—enters it—and, *dies*.
" Then farewel all self-satisfying Schemes,
" Her well-built Systems, philosophic Dreams—
" Deceitful views of future bliss, farewel!
" He reads his sentence at the flames of hell.
" Hard lot of Man! to toil for the reward
" Of Virtue, and yet lose it!"—Wherefore hard?
" He, that would run the race, must guide his horse
" Obedient to the customs of the Course:
" Else, though, unequall'd, to the goal he flies,
" A meaner than himself shall gain the Prize,
" GRACE leads the *right* way."

* Τη γαρ χαριτι τε Θεε σεσωσμενοι εσμεν· ουκ εξ ημων. Ινα μη τις καυχησηται. Hunc nodum expediant, qui saltem opera fidem subsequentia tanti faciunt, ut ex eorum meritis aliquâ ex parte servemur: item, qui sola cæremonialia volunt excludi. BEZA.

Ωςε παντας τυς επαγγελλομενυς και φασκοντας ειναι χριςιανυς χειραγωγειςθαι εις οδον της Αληθειας, και την Πιςιν κρατειν εν ενοτητι τυ πνευματος, εν συνδεσμω της ειρηνης, και εν δικαιοσυνη τυ βιυ.

In searching the sacred pages, in order clearly to discover the import of their contents, there is a passage, which originally fell from the lips of the only infallible Teacher, and the most benevolent Friend of man, that ever appeared in our nature, which has often struck my mind with the most fearful apprehensions for the fate of those, who neglect the Scriptures. Have you ever considered it? "This is the Condemnation—that Light is come into the World, but men *love darkness* rather than light; because their deeds are evil. For every one, that doeth evil, *hateth the light*, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But, he, that doeth truth, cometh to the Light; that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. For whatsoever maketh manifest, is Light *."

* "Light, is a strong and beautiful Metaphor for *Knowledge*, *Purity*, and *Happiness*: and these are the rays,

The error, and the danger, here exposed, is not, that Mankind will not attend to any light at all; but, that their innate aversion is, to *the only true Light*. They will celebrate the light of human Reason; they will extol that, of Philosophy; and they will estimate, to a very undue degree, that, of profound Learning; while they can, with an equally ungrateful and profane indifference, disregard the light of divine Inspiration, and Truth.

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which are diffused around us, not by the Light of Reason, or of human Literature—though it shines with more than common splendour upon our age and nation; but, by the Light of divine Revelation: or, to adopt a more scriptural phrase, "the Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ." This is the sublime medium, through which we discover the glory of the Deity—the beauties of Holiness—the wonders of Mercy—the riches of Grace—the evil of Sin—and the infinite Importance of eternal things.—Have you ever studied the Nature, Properties, and Use, of this Light? Let it not be forgotten, that the very same almighty Fiat, which originally commanded the Light to shine out of chaotic darkness, must say of each of us, Γενεσθω φως, or we shall be like those, who grope for the wall at noon-day. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

In no other way, and upon no principle, more amiable, or more moral, than that, of "loving darkness rather than light," can we possibly account for it, that so many of us shall dare to deny, in the undisguised spirit of blasphemy *, that, *Salvation is by Grace*; or that, it is *through Faith*; that this Faith is *not of Ourselves*; or that, *it is the Gift of God* †.

* This may be thought a very strong word: but, it is selected for that reason: for, if the literal meaning of βλασφημια be, *evil speaking*, is not this the highest degree of it? Of some, it is said, δοξας βλασφημουσιν; to others, μηδενα βλασφημειν. Nos, in rebus sacris, et ad Deum pertinentibus, vocabulum græcum retinuimus. And, if we are not to speak evil of Dignities, or of any Man—how much less of *God*, and his *Truth!* To deny which, is, transfigere nomen Jehovæ: and, are we to suffer that to be outraged, and trampled under foot, by representing such enormity in a lukewarm language—falsely called, moderate? Is not this to connive at the infamy, and to be a party in the shame? Absit a nobis impietas tam maximè flagitiosa, et abhorrenda!

† I intreat the candid and ingenuous Reader to mark, whether it has not been proved to *demonstration*, from the Premises, that those are *primary*, *fundamental*, and *immutable Maxims* of inspired writ. To speak of them, as so many mere speculative notions, is, to my understanding, the language of Infidelity, and one of the most disguised Insults, that can be offered to the divine Wis-

To the same spirit of Blasphemy, however concealed, or masked, under high pretensions to Morality, and Virtue, it must be ascribed, that so many "Messengers of Satan, transformed into Angels of Light," have impudently opposed the position, now to be established: and, that it may appear the more luminous, we shall prove, that,

SECTION VIII.

Salvation is neither to be sought, nor expected, because it is never to be obtained, by any works that we can perform *.

If there be any distinct branch of christian Science capable of demonstration, in its strictest sense, it is this. The person, who can admit, *ex professo*, the divine authority of the Scriptures, and resist the force of that evidence, by which

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dom—from whatever quarter it may arise. The frequency of this dishonour done to God, where it might least have been expected, renders this protest the more necessary.

* "If the profoundest Humility towards God be the highest instance of piety; if every thing within us, and

this point will be confirmed, must have a construction of Intellect very far indeed from being enviable. Such resistance should only serve to remind us of Satan's address to the resplendent orb of day—

"Sun, how I *hate* thy beams*."

In arranging the arguments, to be adduced on this occasion, the most judicious method will be, to dispose them ac-

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without us, if every thing we know of GOD, every thing we know of Ourselves, preach humility to us, as the foundation of every virtue, as the life and soul of all holiness; if Sin had its beginning from pride, and hell be the effect of it;" who would not wish to be radically cured of an evil so enormous? One of the first steps towards that cure, is, the cordial admission of this truth into the mind: so far is it from being any speculative notion. If all the arts of subtilty and sophistry can make it appear, that the doctrine of Salvation by works of righteousness, which we can do, is calculated to make us "*lowly in our own eyes*," as the Scriptures express it, let it stand. I shall not draw "the Sword of the Spirit against it." But, it is the language of Pride—horrid Pride: which is "an abomination to the Lord."

* The gloomy rays, emitted from the infernal regions, were more congenial with his apostate mind! And, is there nothing analogous to this, in the Disposition of

cording to their degree of strength.—We have been told, with a calmness and composure, which ought to shock every moral sensibility of the Soul—because, it would "change the Truth of God himself into a lie"—that, our *works* are the terms, or conditions*, of our Pardon, our

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those, who, instead of being charmed with the beauties and glories of that more illustrious Luminary, "The Word of God," chuse rather to dwell in the dreary Caverns of Infidelity? They indeed deceive themselves, and impose upon others, by calling it Philosophy. Epicurus dignified his Atheology, and Democritus, his Atomicism, with the same honourable title! Our System, discarding all these affectations of vain Philosophy, has said, 1 Cor. iii. 18, 19. I agree with a Writer of uncommon talents, and science—though by no means favourable to the sentiments advanced in these sketches—that, "There would be more real knowledge and more true wisdom among mankind, if there were less learning, and philosophy."

* No judicious Writer, or Teacher, will make use of expressions, in concerns of great importance, that are even *liable* to be misunderstood. Why prefer them, when others, perfectly free from that inconvenience, are at hand? Is this ingenuous? If we are saved by *Grace*—through *Faith*—and *that*, not of ourselves—not of *Works*—what place can a man of common Sense, or common Honesty, find, for Conditions? Unless indeed

Acceptance, our Justification, and our final Salvation. But, " if there come any unto you, and bring this doctrine, neither bid him God speed, nor receive him into your house. For, he, that biddeth him God speed, is a partaker of his evil deeds. For, what saith THE SCRIPTURE?"

The strain of the Scripture runs thus; " he, that believeth not God, hath made him a Liar!"—" By the works of the Law shall no flesh living be justified, in his sight. For, by the Law is the knowledge of Sin.—Now, to him that *worketh*, is the reward, not reckoned of GRACE, but of debt; but, to him that *worketh not*, but

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he means to contradict himself, as well as to blaspheme the sacred Truth, and will undertake to prove, that the conditions, for which he pleads, are *not* works! In that case, it would become us, rather to compassionate his derangement, than to censure his folly. In omnibus his assertionibus unicum hunc nobis proposuimus scopum, ut gloria *Salutis gratuitæ* Deo et Christo illabata maneat. Ειδοτες οτι Χαριτι εστε σεσωσμενοι, ουκ εξ εργων, αλλα Θεληματι Θεου, δια Ιησου Χριστου. POLYCARP. EPIST.

believeth on Him that justifieth *the ungodly*, his Faith is counted for Righteousness. Even as David also" [for, there never was any other mode of Salvation, since the Fall of man in paradise,] " describeth the blessedness of the Man, unto whom God imputeth Righteousness *without works*. Therefore, it is of *Faith*, that it might be by GRACE*."

But, what if we should produce you a passage from the same unerring Testimony, which will assure you, that it is *impossible*, in the nature of things, that our

* The force of the Argument here, is, that whatever tends to diminish the splendour and riches of *divine Grace*, in the Salvation of Man—whether it be sentiment, or expression—must be utterly rejected by those, who intend to subscribe to the truth of Heaven, or to give God the glory of their Redemption. Whatever defects and infirmities, physical, intellectual, or moral, may attach to the Writer of these pages, he can appeal to the Omniscient, that, to secure this grand point, is his principal object in publishing these Strictures: and, if this be not the grand Aim of the inspired Oracles, he has confessedly mistaken their true import.

Salvation should be of *Grace*, and of *Works* too;—will you still pertinaciously adhere to the abominations of error, and falsehood, in contempt of celestial Truth? Will you discard both the *verum*, and the *decens*, at the same time? For, what do we read? "If it be *by Grace*, it is no more of works: otherwise, *Grace* is no more *Grace*. But, if it be of works, then it is no more of *Grace*: otherwise, Work is no more Work." So that, the invariable Maxim, to be observed, by every intelligent, honest, upright Teacher of Christianity, is, that, Gratia non est *ullo modo* Gratia, si non sit *omni modo* Gratia. If of Grace, then *not of works*. "For, by GRACE are ye saved *."

* In this contest, therefore, it is demonstrably evident, that the Champions for those errors, we are labouring to destroy, as eclipsing the lustre of divine Grace, let their ostensible plea, or excuses, be what they may, are actually pouring contempt, at one and the same time, on the το καλον, the το πρεπον, and the το αληθινον. How this accords with their professional concern for *Virtue*, and *Morals*, is an ænigma too puzzling for us to explain. Instead

But, there is another argument still in reserve, which will not only corroborate what we have already advanced, but, it is to be hoped, will strike the most salutary terror, as well as conviction, into the minds of those, who have hitherto presumed to dispute the dictates of Heaven, or to arraign the wisdom of God, at their impious Bar. For, have we never heard, that, "As many as are of the works of the Law

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of promoting these aberrations from the Lux evangelica, posce *Exemplar* honesti, εκεινο αυτο Ειδος, ῳ παντα τα οσια εστι. Let those, who deem it either *wiser*, or *safer*, to pursue that plan, betake themselves to their Terms, Conditions, and recommendatory Performances; as for Me, Ps. lxii. 5——8. Isa. xxvi. 3, 4, 12.

I shall quote, on this occasion, a foreign writer, who has no Rival in our day. Et hoc in confesso est: veram et propriè dictam fœderis Gratiæ *conditionem*, quâ precipuè distinguitur à fœdere operum, hanc esse; ut omnis justitia, in quâ jus vitæ unicè fundatur, præstetur a Mediatore et Sponsore fœderis. Rectè igitur dicitur, NEFAS esse quidquam boni agere *ea intentione*, ut id agendo nostram promoveamus salutem. Benedixit nobis Deus omni benedictione spirituali in cœlis *in Christo*. Hæc perpetua est et constans Scripturarum doctrina, a quâ ne *specie quidem aliqua verborum* recedendum est.

are under the Curse" of that Law; from which there is no Redemption, but *freely* by the *Grace* of God, and through Faith in the Blood of the Redeemer? Is it possible, that, with The Bible before our eyes, we should be strangers to such a declaration? Gal. iii. 10*.

* Might we not very safely rest the decision of our Cause, upon this single passage? Let the unfeigned Lover of truth dwell upon it, with critical accuracy, and what will it teach him? Will it not teach him the absolute impossibility of our being justified, or saved, in any degree, in any wise, by our personal obedience to the divine Law; which pronounces its righteous Curse upon *every failure?* For, the words are a categorical Proposition; extending to all persons—all times—and all things: not merely to the βαρυτερα τυ νομυ, "the weightier matters of the Law," but, to those, which may seem of the smallest concernment: so that, every idle word, every vain thought, every corrupt affection, and how much more, every evil action, is of itself sufficient to render us liable to *the Curse*, which the moral Governour of the world has denounced against *all* unrighteousness—against *every* transgression. Every omission of what is good—every secret evil, known only to God—and every sinful operation of the mind—exposes us to his eternal wrath, and indignation: nor is there any refuge from it, but in the divine Grace and Mercy. Recollect only, that the least sin is a violation of the whole Law, Jam. ii. 10.;

"Say I these things as a Man—or saith not THE SCRIPTURE the same also?"—For the sake of life and immortality, search for yourself, and see. Indulge the spirit of free, ingenuous, and sober Enquiry—and, I cannot but suppose, you will soon discover, that, if you depend on any thing, which you call *works*, *terms*, or *conditions**,

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that the least violation incurs the Curse pronounced against every act of disobedience; and your own Reason will compel you to deduce this Inference—that, there can be no hope of Salvation for us, but in the Redeemer. Gal. iii. 13. "The way of Salvation is so ordered, as that we should see the necessity for Christ: a continual necessity—a necessity in all things." Is. xlv. 22—. Let us be allowed the licence of a little inelegant repeti tion in a matter, which ought to be fully understood. Locke has used much more, in his doctrine of Ideas—though of less importance. "Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little, is, on some occasions, both expedient, and useful."

* The writer has no other quarrel with this phraseology, but what arises from a deep conviction, that the *direct tendency* of it is, "to frustrate the Grace of God—αθετειν την Χαριν τ Θεϑ. Gal. ii. 21." Under this conviction, he deems it *impious* to treat it with any lenity; "it is to be withstood; we are not to give place to it, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel may re-

of your own performing, for Pardon, Acceptance, and Salvation, either the moral Governour of the world must make a sacrifice of his own Oracles to your conceit, vanity, and insolence; or, the Cause must certainly, and *eternally*, go against you. For, against every failure of perfect and perpetual Obedience, the Law of Works has issued its righteous Curse. And that Curse, is, wrath revealed, and ruin threatened. But, "Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us. Therefore, we conclude, that a Man is justified by Faith, and saved by Grace, *without* the deeds of the Law."

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main with us." Dissimulation, in this case, is wickedness. Gal. ii. 11——16. Such unyielding maxims will, no doubt, be very disgusting to those, who tell us, that, "To men of liberal minds, all Countries, and all *Religions*, are the same!" and, to those again, who are of opinion, that, "none but learned Bigots will fight for *modes of Faith!*" If so, the Apostles were Martyrs to their own Bigotry; not, to "the Truth as it is in Jesus!" For, what is Christianity itself—but a peculiar mode of Faith? therefore called, among other significant Titles, "The word of Faith." Rom. x. 8, 9.

But, if this Doctrine be so plainly revealed, so fully ascertained, and so easy to be demonstrated, why is it so little preached, understood, or believed?—The Causes are as infamous, as they are obvious. They shall be briefly stated.

It might be said, that this is the Age of reason, and philosophy—no less so, of corrupt fashion, dissipation, and levity. The very Literature of the times, through all its departments, wears the stamp of infidelity, and atheism*. Religion is either

* The very Novels of the day teem with this excess of Infamy. Such is the vigorous, not to say the diabolical activity of the Enemies of the christian Faith, that they will make use of this vehicle to convey their poison through the land. So that, the youthful minds of all the rising generation are likely to be contaminated with these principles of Vice and Depravity. The torrent has been suffered to swell to such a height, that no repulsive power of human effort can now counteract its fatal operations. The moral Alarm however has been sounded, in the language of no less patriotic than just severity, by the Author of "The Pursuits of Literature;" whom, it is honour to celebrate. The political Salvation of the

kept entirely in the back ground—or, if at any time it be brought forward at all, it is *such a Thing*—so disfigured, and so disgraced—that the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the glorious company of the Apostles, and the noble army of Martyrs, would blush to own it.

And, why so? why should modern Christianity be so hideous a metamorphosis of that, which is represented to us in the pure WORD OF GOD?—In some characters, it is owing to an *Ignorance*, for which candour and charity would in vain seek an excuse; it is so *wilful*. An Ignorance of God—of his Law—of Sin—of Christ—

Country, must now depend entirely upon uncommon exertions to inspire religious sentiment, and in providing parochial Schools. There seems to be no other mode of rescuing the great mass of Society from universal depravity of principle, and manners. As to the higher classes, they are impenetrable to every address, but that of an approaching Death, and the awful hour of a final Judgment.

and of his Gospel. An Ignorance, which must be *indulged*—because, it is surrounded with a blaze of Light, and might easily be corrected. But, "the Light shineth in darkness,—and the darkness comprehendeth it not." 1 John i. 5—7.

In other characters it may be ascribed to a *Prejudice*, as corrupt, because no less obstinate—and therefore, no less culpable. How often do we meet with persons, who can enter their warmest and most indignant protest against the weakness and absurdity of prepossession, in every instance, but in that, which applies to themselves, and to those unscriptural, preposterous, and antichristian mistakes, they are determined to entertain, upon the

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Any appeal to their superior sensibilities, talents, or patriotism, is an idle farce. Probatum est. Some indeed have attempted to *ridicule* them out of their infamies; but, they are beyond the reach of Wit, and Satire; and is not their Case too serious for *Irony?*

highest of all concerns! They acknowledge a professional belief in a Revelation, the most essential characteristicks of which they renounce! Nor is this at all unfrequent, among those of superior penetration, genius, and judgment, in all other matters*.

* The Sources of Error, or wrong Judgment, it will be seen, by those, who have made a proper use of their reflective Powers, are numerous. Sometimes our mistakes arise from Ignorance; and sometimes, from Inadvertency; but, most frequently, from corrupt Passions, and allowed Prejudices: the two-fold Evil attending the latter is, that they blind the Perception to the evidence of Truth, and they throw a false colour upon that Truth itself. For this reason, the Scribes and Pharisees could discover neither Wisdom, nor Excellence, in the very Mirrour of all Perfection. I should therefore not only maintain, with Locke, that, "He, who judges, without informing himself to the utmost that he is capable, cannot acquit himself of judging amiss; and that he, who forms a precipitate Opinion, because he will not take the trouble to search into the grounds of it, is so far culpable;" but that, the Person, who indulges any wilful Prejudices against moral Truth, deserves a censure of much greater severity. For as none are so *blind*, as those, who *will not* see, who can be more *guilty?*

The "Essay on human Understanding" is extremely defective, in not having enlarged on this topic. That de-

Much of this, I apprehend, may be attributed to another cause—why genuine, apostolic, or biblical Christianity is so little understood, preached, or believed: to that *Pride* of understanding, and of heart, which, as it is of all evils the most offensive, because the most diabolical, in the *eye of Heaven*, is most obstructive to the access of divine Truth into the human soul. Neither indeed can any thing be more repugnant than this to the whole nature, system, and design, of our Religion, or to "the simplicity that is in

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fect may, in some measure, be supplied, by a due regard to the Doctrine of *Prejudices* in Watts's Logic. We also profess to abhor prejudice; but, where is the person, who does not cherish it in some form? Where is the unreserved votary of pure and simple Truth? He knows, that this is the Evil, which, in numberless instances, is the main Prop of those moral and religious Errors, which have been so destructive to mankind, as to their supreme Concerns. We ought to be continually apprized by those, whose official duty it is, how unsafe it is to take any thing for granted in matters of Religion, which we have not ourselves examined; and how inexcusable it is to do this, in cases, wherein we may be able, with a little pains, to judge for ourselves.

Christ:" by which, we are every where taught, that, "the *loftiness* of man shall be brought down, and the *haughtiness* of men shall be laid low; and the Lord *alone* shall be exalted *." In perfect conformity to which idea, we are required to believe, that,

SECTION IX.

Salvation is so constituted, by the divine appointment, that there shall be no possible Ground of boasting, on the part of Man†.

* Among the various sorts of Pride, the most specious, and the most dangerous, are generally the least noticed: such as, reasoning Pride, and spiritual Pride. But, "if spiritual Pride be the worst kind of pride, it should be recollected, that a confident reliance on our own Reason, as having a right to determine all matters between God and Man—or, on our own Goodness and Virtue, to recommend us to his Favour—may prove in the end the highest instances of the *worst* offence, that can be committed against his *Wisdom*, and *Grace*." This hint deserves, at least, the attentive consideration of those, who are at all conscious of their accountableness to God: and, it will be acknowledged, I think, that, if we must err, it is much more prudent, and safe, to err on the side of *Humility* and *Self-renunciation*. It is even more amiable, as well as decorous, to abase, than to exalt, ourselves. Luke xiv. 7—11 . . . xviii. 9——14. Eph. iv. 1, 2.

† It is easy to conceive, that such a Thesis will meet

From the most impartial Enquiry, I have been able to make, into the various *Grounds*, upon which mankind are propense to appreciate themselves unduely—to exalt themselves—or, to "think more highly of themselves than they ought to think," as to the matter now under our investigation, I can discover only these; which, it may be safe, distinctly to enumerate—for the benefit of those, who need, or wish, to be informed.

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with the most indignant "opposition of Science, falsely so called;" upon the same principle, as that, which misled the athenian Philosophers to ridicule and insult St. Paul, as a Babbler, because he preached to them "Jesus, and the Resurrection." The Arguments, by which they replied to his reasoning, were, *Ignorance*, *Pride*, and *Prejudice*. Three goodly Logicians, no doubt! and always at hand. But, so it is: "the pride of human Reason and Philosophy is not easily reconciled to the humility of the Gospel, and to the shame of the Cross. Those, who are accustomed to pay a sort of adoration to the delusions of their Imagination—and to sacrifice to their own Vanity, and Conceit—are generally the most violent enemies of the Truth. A Set of men, who make profession of hearing themselves, and of being heard by others, are not in a very proper disposition to hear *God*, or to receive his *Word*."

The Grounds of "*boasting*," which are generally taken, are, *Reason—Free-will—Free-agency—Philosophy—Learning—religious Privileges—superior Virtue—comparative Excellence*—and such like.—Now then, it is, as I conceive, of the very nature of a Mind properly illuminated—I do not mean, by the Spirit of free enquiry, according to the recent prostitution of that phrase; much less, by modern Philosophism—but, by the *Word* and *Grace* of God,—to enter cordially into the views, the designs, the determinations of Heaven, so far as they are revealed to us in sacred Writ *. And,

* "To shew forth the riches of his GRACE," is one of the most palpable and prominent Designs of the supreme Wisdom: how then, upon what christian Principles can he be considered as of the same Mind, and Judgment, with the divine Author of Revelation, who does not enforce and treat it in such a manner, as shall evidently *express* the same Design? Let our Charity extend as far as possible, salvâ Veritate—only so as that it infringe not on the rights of eternal Truth. For, Η Αγαπη συνχαιρει τη Αληθεια.

Denique, huc tendunt omnia, ut Deo et Christo in solidum salutis nostræ gloria transcribatur, nostra autem gloriatio prorsùs exsulet. Gloriatio est, dicere aliquid de se ipso, quod sit causa vel evadendi judicium, vel juris

among these Determinations of the most High, none can be more explicit and evident, than that, every possible Ground of "*boasting*," on the part of Man, shall be *utterly* and *for ever* done away, in the business of his Salvation. "Where is Boasting then?" says the Scripture.—"It is excluded"—is the Answer.—"By what Law? *of Works?*—Nay—but, by the Law of Faith." Rom. 3 *.

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expectandi hereditatem, vel etiam quidquam petendi a Deo. Talis gloriatio prorsùs est exclusa: *non lege Operum*—id est, ea doctrina, quæ salutem per opera consequendam monstrat, hominique eam præstanti gloriandi fiduciam dat; sed, *lege Fidei*—quæ docet justitiam quærendam in Christo, et apprehendendam fide, sine ullis actionibus nostris, quæ *hic* quomodocunque in considerationem veniant.

WITSIUS.

* We have heard men of profound learning, and high philosophic repute—public Teachers—who have dared to affirm, that the inspired penman is speaking here of the works of the ceremonial Law only. A greater *Falsehood* is hardly within the region of possibility—nor a greater proof of the *wilful blindness* of those, who oppose the Truth, and are determined *not* to see it. Are you an *honest* Man? Then, instead of listening to any human Authority, read over the preceding chapter carefully—

No person, therefore, can have had "the eyes of his Understanding enlightened," so as to be of the same Mind and Judgment with the only wise God, who, either directly or indirectly, upon any plea or pretence whatever, shall presume to talk of any inherent sufficiency of Reason, Will, Power, Virtue, Goodness, or Morals, to *recommend*, much less to *entitle* him, to the Grace, Mercy, and Favour of God in Christ Jesus. So far from encouraging or insinuating such an Opinion, he will reject it with *abhorrence*. He will consider it as erecting his impious Crest, swollen with moral pride and insolence,

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and decide for yourself, whether the Apostle refers here to *the moral Law*, or no. The fact is; he is labouring to shew, that we must be "saved by Grace through Faith" alone; and that every imaginable ground of *boasting*, on our part, must be totally and for ever excluded, *shut out*; as much as we shall certainly be, from the beatific Vision, if we are not made most cordially and humbly willing to be saved in this way. We may say with the haughty Cardinal, Cœlum non *gratis* accipiam! but, let us beware, that it be not said to us, in return, Πορευεσθε οι κατηραμενοι εις το πυρ το αιωνιον. Matt. xxv. 41.

against the immutable resolves of Him, before whom, "all Nations are as *nothing*—and they are counted to Him *less than nothing*, and vanity *. Should a thought, of this stamp, obtrude itself upon his mind, it will be repelled with detestation—as calculated to excite him to disobey the supreme Authority; and will therefore serve to lay him prostrate in deeper Humility before the throne of Grace, and provoke him to say, with increasing ardour, and devotion,

"God forbid, that I should *glory*," [or boast,] "save in the Cross of our

* Exalted views of the divine Being, and a proper Sense of our own moral Insignificance, not to say, Depravity, will effectually cure us of being "puffed up with a fleshly Mind." A meditative perusal of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah might have some tendency to produce this good effect. Let the careful Reader of that astonishing specimen of the sublime, the beautiful, and the pathetic, place himself in the presence of a Being of *such* incomprehensible majesty and grandeur, and he must surely be conscious of his own nothingness; he must feel himself lighter than the smallest dust on the balance; he must be annihilated, as it were, before him.

Lord Jesus Christ! For, unto Him shall man come; and all, that are incensed against Him, shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the Seed of Israel, [the Israel of God,] be justified, and in Him shall they *glory.*"——" Not of Works, lest any Man should boast." Gal. vi. 14——16.

" Heaven on such terms!" some cry with proud disdain—
" Incredible, impossible, and vain!"
" Rebel, because 'tis easy to obey,
" And scorn for its own sake the *gracious* Way.
" These are the sober—in whose cooler brains
" Some thought of Immortality remains:
" The rest, too busy or too gay, to wait
" On the sad theme, their everlasting State,
" Sport for a day, and perish in a night—
" The foam upon the waters not so light."

Ανθρωποισι γαρ
Τοις πασι κοινον εστι τεξαμαρτανειν·
Επει δ' αμαρτη, κεινος ηκετ' ες' ανηρ
Αβελος κδ' ανολβος, οστις ες κακον
Πεσων κειται, μηδ' ακινητος πελει.
Ανθαδια τοι σκαιοτητ' οφλισκανει.

ANTIG. SOPH.

AN

INCIDENTAL DISSERTATION.

" Philosophy, that does not dream, or stray,
" Walks arm in arm with REASON all her way.
" All Truth is precious, if not all divine—
" And what dilates the pow'rs, must needs refine.
" But Reason still, unless divinely taught,
" Whate'er she learns, learns nothing, as she ought:
" The lamp of REVELATION only shews—
" What human Wisdom cannot but oppose—
" That Man, in nature's richest mantle clad,
" And graced with all Philosophy can add,
" Though fair without, and luminous within,
" Is still the progeny and heir of sin.
" Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his Pride;
" He feels his need of an unerring Guide;
" And knows, that falling he shall rise no more,
" Unless the Pow'r, that bad him stand, restore.
" This is indeed PHILOSOPHY: this known,
" Makes Wisdom, worthy of the name, his own:
" And, without this, whatever he discuss—
" Whether the space between the stars and us—
" Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,
" Weigh sunbeams, carve a fly, or split a flea—
" The solemn Trifler with his boasted skill
" Toils much, and is a solemn Trifler still:
" Blind was he born, and, his misguided eyes
" Grown dim in trifling studies, blind he dies."

Υπερ μεν τε ορᾶν και ακουειν, και νη δια υπερ αυτε τε ζην, και των συνεργων προς αυτο, ευχαριστει τω Θεῳ· μεμνησο δ' οτι αλλο τι σοι δεδωκε κρειττον απαντων τετων, το χρησομενον αυτοις, το δοκιμαζον, το την αξιαν εκαστε λογιζομενον—τα ἰδια της λογικης ψυχης.

Prerogativa Dei totum hominem complectitur: nec minus ad *Rationem* quam ad *Voluntatem* humanam extenditur. Quare, sicut Legi divinæ obedire tenemur, licet reluctetur *Voluntas*, ita et verbo Dei fidem adhibere, licet reluctetur *Ratio*. Etenim, si ea duntaxat credamus, quæ sunt Rationi nostræ censentanea, *rebus* adsentimur, non *Auctori*.

BACONUS, de augmento Scientiarum.

IF there be any real Dignity attached to the human nature, it must be, when the respective talents, with which we are endowed, and distinguished, are devoted to their great Original, and to the promotion of his *principal Designs* upon earth*. To

* "I persuade myself, and would willingly persuade others, that the life and faculties of Man, at the best but short, and limited, cannot be more honourably and more usefully employed, than in the search of Knowledge: more especially of that sort, which pertains to the moral culture of his Reason, as the Seat of intelligence—which relates to his Duty—and which conduces to his final Happiness. In these enquiries, therefore, wherever I perceive

imagine it is within the compass of the most exalted powers of Intellect to discover, or to fathom, those designs, any further than they are revealed by their supreme Author himself, is a degree of arrogance and presumption, which no sober mind will dare to indulge. With such a Revelation, however, it has been taken for granted, we are favoured: and, infinite pains have been nobly employed, to inform the ignorant, and to convince the

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any glimmering of Truth before me, I readily pursue, and endeavour to trace it to its source—without any reserve or caution of pushing the discovery too far, or opening too great a glare of it to the Public. I look upon the discovery of any thing that is true, as a valuable acquisition."—I would willingly converse with Mankind as one Friend with another—without reserve: and, in that case, though the Press, which is indeed most unmercifully abused, is the medium of our intercourse, the least, they can expect of me, is, that I should tell them, what I conceive to be, *the Truth*. Should they treat it with indignation, and dissect and atomize me for my pains, it will be no proof of their urbanity, and I shall think it rather hard measure; but endeavour to rest satisfied, with no uncommon lot in this strange world—with an ill requital for a good office.

obstinate, of its divine Authority, its humiliating Necessity, and its inestimable Worth

To this end, all the powers of Genius, Erudition, and Eloquence, have been exhausted, in arranging its *Prophecies;* in proving the moral certainty of its *Miracles;* and, in illustrating the transcendent excellency of its *Doctrines*, and *Precepts.* So much indeed, and, with such superior abilities, has been submitted upon those important subjects, to public consideration, that, we ought to stand astonished to hear, there still remains one speculative Infidel among us*.

* "What is *Truth?* said scoffing Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly, there be, that delight in giddiness, and who count it a bondage to fix a Belief; affecting Free-will in thinking, as well as in acting: and though the Sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing Wits, which are of the same vein—though there be not so much blood in them, as was in those of the ancients. But, it is not only the difficulty, and the labour, which men take in finding out of *Truth*—nor again, that when it is found, it improveth upon men's thoughts—shall bring *Lies* into favour; but, a natural, though corrupt love of the Lie itself."

LORD BACON.

How, indeed, is this to be accounted for, in the history of Man, and Mind—that, notwithstanding the complicated Evidences for the truth of Christianity, adjusted, as they have been, with so much science, beauty, and order, it should still be discredited, and opposed, by any description of people? So long as we adhere to any rules of propriety, we cannot ascribe the pertinaciousness of such characters to their paramount sagacity, and penetration: nor am I acquainted with any *virtuous* Charity, or Candour, but must attribute it, either to their incapableness to comprehend those evidences—or, to their not making any correct use of their Reason, in this case—or else, to some most

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" A Revelation from God, that justifies itself from the creation of the world; which tells you every truth, that a wise man would be glad to hear; which is supported with all the Authority, that an omnipotent God can give; which is confirmed by all the Assurance, that human Testimony can afford; is of no weight against a few bold assertions of weak mortals, who exceed their Fellow-creatures only in *arrogance*, and *presumption!*"

wretched and faulty perversion of it. And now that I have fallen on the subject, suffer me to affix a few illustrative remarks on *Reason*, in every various form it can assume*: which, I beg leave to distinguish, by the several phrases of, *human Reason*—*sacred Reason*—and *right Reason;* together with their secondary adjuncts, *false reasoning*, and *just reasoning*.

Human Reason†.

* Nothing can be of greater importance than the right understanding, as well as the proper use and application, of this Faculty. We have seen, that it can be prostituted to the most mischievous purposes: that it has been frequently introduced to plead the cause of Atheism itself! and, in all our treatises on the most interesting topics of Religion, Virtue, and Morality, countless are the instances, in which human Reason is the prominent idea! Nevertheless, there is scarce another term in our language so equivocal, or indefinite. Will the Reader accept the result of my private ruminations on this subject? They are offered to his candid attention—if not with the most perfect perspicuity, at least with the advantages of method, and brevity. Μηδεν αγαν. Omnia enim breviora reddet Ordo, et Ratio, et Modus.

† Ratio significat facultatem hominis, quâ percipit, et judicat, verumque a falso dignoscit: sed, uti nunc sunt

For the special purpose of investigating the true nature of human Reason, and of finding out what it really is, *in se*, I have laboured to detach myself entirely from all external objects—to abstract myself, as much as possible, from every impression of sense—and, if I may be permitted the term, to idealize myself*. In this parti-

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homines, et in statu naturali, in nemine mortalium *recta*. Cæterùm Ratio, quamvis corrupta, Ratio tamen manet; id est, ea facultas, quâ homo cognoscit, et judicat. Idcirco si divinæ res, si mysteria Religionis cognoscenda sint, non aliter id fieri potest nisi per Rationem. Ipsa fides, quum cognitio, et νοησις sit, et assensus, Rationis, sive Mentis, est operatio.

* There was a current report, when I was under the tuition of Alma Mater Cantabrigiensis, that the great Sir Isaac Newton used to study with his eyes shut, and his head between his knees. Some such process seems absolutely necessary in all abstract enquiries. "Scientific knowledge is best acquired by the Soul's abstraction from the outward objects of sense, and retiring into itself; that so it may the better attend to its own inward notions, and ideas. And, therefore, it is many times observed, that over-much reading and hearing of other men's discourses, though learned and elaborate, doth not only distract the Mind, but also debilitates the intellectual powers, and makes the mind passive and sluggish, by

cular situation, I have proposed to myself the following question, What is human Reason*? But, the further I have pursued the research in this abstract mode, the less I have been able to form any clear and distinct conception of the thing. And, no wonder: for, what was it, but labouring at an almost impossibility; that is, to dive into *the essence* of Intellect. An effort, even more vain and hopeless in metaphysic, than in physical, enquiries.

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calling it too much outward."—Indeed, a Free-thinker, in the good meaning of that term, is seldom to be found.

* I know not whether I shall be understood, but, it is perfectly luminous to my own conception, when I say, that human Reason may be called the active Power of intellectuality: and, reasoning, is that power in exercise. Science, as one expresses it, is not Sense: but, there is another Power in the soul besides that of Sense, or Passion, to which science, knowledge, and intellection, is to be referred. Both men and beasts do perceive the objects of Sense; but, ratiocinations concerning their nature and utilities, are slowly, by labour and help of instruction, attained unto. This it is to seek knowledge, *εν τω περι εκεινων συλλογισμω· εν εκεινω τω ονοματι οτι ποτ' εχει η ψυχη, οταν αυτη καθ' αυτην πραγματευεται περι τα ονται.*

From this affected elevation towards occult Science, I soon felt myself under the necessity of descending to some more level plain; and, to trace the nature of Reason, through the medium of its several operations—or, the manner, in which it is usually exercised, and applied: and then, I found myself on a kind of terra firma; a δος, πϖ ϛω; and it immediately appeared to me a sort of *intellectual Substratum* *.

* "As the *Mind* of man is the noblest work of God, which comes under our inspection, and *Reason* the noblest of its intellectual faculties, it cannot therefore be deemed any trifling study. It must indeed be acknowledged, that, though it is of all objects nearest to us, and seems the most within our reach, it is very difficult to attend to its operations, so as to form a distinct notion of them; and, on that account, there is no branch of knowledge, in which the ingenious and speculative have fallen into so great errors, and even absurdities. These errors and absurdities have given rise to a general prejudice against all enquiries of this nature. Because, Philosophers have for many ages given different and contradictory accounts of the powers of the Mind, it is concluded, that all speculations concerning them are chimerical, and visionary."—Whereas the fact is, that, we attempt too much; we neglect the principles of common Sense; we despise the language of universal Experience; and disdain to be wise with sobriety. "There are many things, respect-

For example. Experimental philosophers, in their disquisitions on Matter

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ing the nature and the structure of body, and of mind, which our faculties cannot reach, and many difficulties, which the ablest philosopher cannot resolve." Above all, let us never forget, that, the Sources of mistake, and error, from within and without, are so many and various, and so do they attack us in every direction, that I can see no prospect of any intellectual security from their influence, but by constant application to a divine Agency. To believe in God, is, to believe in him, among other things, as Των φωτων Ὁ πατηρ. "The first Creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the Sense; the last was the light of Reason; and his Sabbath-work, ever since, is, the illumination of his Spirit. First, he breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos; then, he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his Chosen."

LORD BACON'S ESSAYS.

There are however too many of us, who set themselves up for the Illuminati, the Lights of the world—O! how unlike this prodigy of universal Science! who speak of Reason, as they ought to speak of *Scripture*—as if it were Το Μετρον παντων, as if it were itself Παντα νοερως: instead of being the Vis cognitrix, "the cognoscitive Power," or Capacity—by which we are as liable to receive Error, as Truth, unless it be properly regulated. Numberless are the instances of Authors, who have made use of their Reason in works of five hundred pages, who have scarcely reasoned *aright* in fifteen. As Truth, Ex-

and Spirit, inform us, that we have no positive idea even of *Substance;* which is nevertheless an object of the *senses*—both of the sight and touch. "We accustom ourselves," say they, "to suppose some Substratum, in which an assemblage of many ideas subsists, and from which they result; and which therefore we call, Substance. But, if any one will examine himself, concerning his notion of pure substance, in general, he will find, that he has no other idea of it at all, but only a supposition of he knows not what support of such qualities, which are capable of producing simple ideas in us; which qualities, we commonly call *Accidents.* Should it be demanded of any one, what

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cellence, and Good, ought to be the primary pursuits of mankind, it is benevolent, frequently to apprize them of this. Were it not an invidious task, and would it not expose me to the suspicion of extreme conceit, I could produce from some Authors of the highest reputation, the grossest *self-contradictions* in the space of fifty lines only! Their object, in that case, has frequently been to exalt their *Idol*, human Reason.

it is, to which these qualities, or accidents—such as solidity, extension, and colour—adhere, he would not be in a much better case than the poor Indian, who, saying that the world was supported by a great elephant, was asked, what the elephant rested on? To which he replied, "a great tortoise." But, being again pressed to know what supported the tortoise, he answered, "Something, *he knew not what.*" The Idea then, to which we give the general name, Substance, is nothing but the *unknown* support of those qualities, which we imagine cannot exist sine re substante.

There is in this respect, if I mistake not, *a perfect analogy* between Reason, and Substance *. The former, I humbly

* Who, that has carefully perused the immortal work of bishop Butler, can be ignorant of the great advantages, and irresistible force, of analogical argument? No Viper, I believe, has attempted to bite that File; no minute Philosopher, to nibble at that Rock. That profound Work remains unanswered—as to its great design. There are parts, however, which *surprise* us.

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presume, for the sake of elucidation, may most fitly be denominated *a mental Substratum;* and its capacity to think, conceive, compare, reflect, weigh, judge, and the like, so many *mental Accidents*, or *Qualities*. These are its internal operations, inhering in a certain unknown something, we agree to call, *Reason*. And this perhaps, if not the only, is the most satisfactory way, in which we can come to the knowledge of its *true nature**.

* Great diligence should certainly be used, in acquiring this knowledge. For my own part, I am led to conceive, that what we call Reason, when it comes to be closely and impartially examined, will prove nothing more than the Power, or Capacity, of reasoning—or, of exerting such and such Exercises of the Mind, *the intellectual Substratum*, as have been already specified. But, if it be true, that the Will does indeed follow the last dictate of the Understanding—as some have argued—that, that determines its elections, it is more than ever necessary, that we should be as clearly and fully acquainted with the nature, and, much more so, with the rectification, of the reasoning Faculty, as we possibly can.

I do not however fall into this opinion exactly myself. In studying the philosophy of Mind, and Man, experimentally, I perceive, that the Understanding is much more frequently the passive dupe of the Will, than the

As to its *Extent*—I have no objection myself to grant it a Province, as wide as the whole range of things—till it arrive at the confines of divine Revelation: it may take in the complete circle of Arts and Sciences, and travel without any controul, huc atque illuc, within those limits: but, let it not dare to profane this Sanctum sanctorum, by making itself the *Cri-*

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former is the Guide, and Directory, of the latter. Video meliora proboque, says Reason; deteriora sequor. But, why so? Stat pro ratione *Voluntas*. Trahit sua quemque Voluptas, haud Intellectus. In the small pretensions, I can make, to metaphysical Science, I entirely unite with the celebrated Author of "the Institutes of eloquence."—Id quod priùs, quodque majus est, ut boni viri simus, *Voluntate* maximè constat. Brevis est institutio vitæ honestæ, beatæque, si *cupias*, si *velis*. John v. 39, 40. Ps. cx. 3.

The Analysis of my own reflections may be thus briefly stated. It is the office of *Reason*, to think—to compare—to estimate: it is the property of the *Will*, to chuse—to prefer—to pursue: it is the province of the *Heart*, to feel—to relish—to enjoy. "Is thine Heart right?" is a question, in Ethiology, of superlative magnitude.—We may see in this very concise Syntagma both the nature and place of Reason, in the intellectual and moral constitution of man.

terion, *Standard*, *Rule*, or *Measure*, of sacred Truth; which belongs to a totally different region... As soon as she is admitted into that TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD, let her bow down with unreserved submission; let her be adorned with that most becoming of all ornaments, the deepest humility; let her surrender all her powers to his infallible dictates. She has nothing to do there, but to listen—to wonder—to adore. "The LORD is in his holy Temple; let all the earth keep silence before him *."

* One of the most laborious and successful Enquirers, de humano Intellectu, et de Arte ratiocinandi, has allowed, that, "whatsoever is divine Revelation ought to over-rule all our opinions, prejudices, and interests, and hath a Right to be received with full assent. Such a submission, as this, of our Reason to Faith, takes not away the land-mark of Knowledge. This shakes not the foundation of Reason—but, leaves us that use of our Faculties, for which they were given us."

Thus far, Locke. Another Writer of no common vigour of Mind, and powers of Eloquence, and though a disguised enemy to the christian Cause, has sense enough to perceive, and honesty enough to own, "that its peculiar and distinguishing Doctrines should be suffered to

From this very cursory view of the nature, use, and extent, of human Reason, we advance to that of

SACRED REASON:

by which, we would be understood to mean, all that Scripture, for which we

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rest on the sole authority of Revelation: that, to make them matter of speculation, is, to make them disputable; and to make them disputable, is, to unfix them in the minds of men: since, in the natural order of things, Revelation may confirm what philosophy teaches, but, philosophy can give no confirmation, nor any further authority, to what Revelation has taught."—This witness is true. For, what can be more preposterous, than to imagine, that the Light of Reason, as it is called, can add either truth, or weight, to the Light of Revelation! It stands, like the Sun, parvis componere magna, beaming lustre on all around it, but indebted to none for any additional splendour. The attention, which is so often paid to the learning of men, while the wisdom of God himself is so much neglected, is among the melancholy proofs of practical Atheism. Who will undertake to determine the difference of guilt, between the folly of saying there is no God, and that, of treating his Word with contempt? Jer. viii. 9.

Πολλῳ το φρονειν ευδαιμονιας
Πρωτον υπαρχει· χρη δε τα γ' εις Θεον
Μηδ' ν ασεπτειν,

consider ourselves indebted to the inspiration of God: and, therefore, we habituate ourselves to celebrate it as the gift of his infinite, unerring, and incomprehensible Wisdom. Actuated by such a conviction, how can we ever speak of it, more highly than it justly deserves? or, how can we exalt it, in any strains equal to its worth?

For, the moment we admit its heavenly Origin, we are bound to acknowledge, that is has an unquestionable authority, and right, imperiously to demand our supreme regard, and the entire resignation of all our intellectual faculties to its injunctions; to every thing, it requires us *to believe—to be*—and, *to do*. To hesitate, to demur, and, much more so, to disobey, is, in this instance, alike irrational, and impious. It is, to sacrifice both Reason and Religion upon the altar of our own rebellion, and perverseness; it is, practically to convert the truth of God into a lie; it is, to worship and serve the crea-

ture more than the Creator*. Whereas, to turn the whole strength of the Mind,

* These however are those broad Verities, which Mankind cannot, will not, bear to be told. They chuse rather to be tickled, and flattered, into the grossest Self-deceit. How often have the honest part of our public Teachers occasion to put that appeal in Gal. iv. 16. " One, of the later school of the Grecians, examineth the matter," says Lord Verulam, " and is at a stand, to think what should be in it, that men should love *Lies*. But, I cannot tell; this same *Truth* is a naked and open day-light, that doth not shew the Masques, and Mummeries, and Triumphs, of the world, half so stately, and daintily, as candle-lights. Doth any man doubt, that, if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men *poor shrunken things*: full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?

" It will be acknowledged, however, even by those who practise it not, [who prefer the amicos of the Obsequium, to the odium of the Veritas,] that, clear and round dealing is the Honour of man's nature: and that, mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold, and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but, it embaseth it. For, these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the Serpent; which goeth *basely* upon the belly, and not upon the feet."

The contemptible Frivolity of the times cannot suffer, what that very frivolity renders the more requisite " a frankness and intrepidity of nature, confirmed by reflec-

and all the affections of the Heart, towards this celestial Source of light, excellence, and bliss, is the only thing, that can be entitled to the appellation of

RIGHT REASON*.

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tion, and sanctioned by the example of the noblest witnesses to virtue, in every country, and in every age of man. *Truth mental*, is the conformity of our conceptions to the realities of things: *Truth verbal*, is the consonance of our language to those conceptions. Hence, a Language, not correspondent to the subject, is an essential failing: in some degree indeed excuseable, if it arise from constitutional timidity, or inadequacy of apprehension; but, extremely culpable, if it result from deficiency of zeal, and temporising suggestions of *Fear*, or *Interest*." We may pity the situation, but, we must be infamous, not to admire the magnanimity of the Character, which has taken for its practical Motto,

Αληθειαν και παρρησιαν.

* It is indeed, at once, the highest instance we can give of mental rectitude, and of intellectual humility: both which seem to be strangely neglected in our general estimates of moral Virtue. That the latter is absolutely necessary, in our cordial reception of divine Truth, will never be disputed by those, who understand it. Sunt enim quædam ita revelata ut credi debeant, intelligi verò æquè ac negari non possint. Quæ scrutari, et ex sui ingenii modulo definire, est audacissimæ præsumtionis, et

For, what is right Reason—but so to perceive, to compare, to reflect, to judge, and to determine, respecting the principles of *Truth*, and *Good*, in our highest concerns, as to have *a right Understanding*, in things pertaining to the divine Nature, Perfection, Glory, and Will; particularly as they are all presented to us in the mediatorial person of the Redeemer. What is it, but to form a *right Judgment*, respecting the things that belong to our true dignity, our present peace, and our everlasting

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pænè Deum redigere in similitudinem et finitudinem rerum creatarum. Talia sunt ἡ Τριας, ἡ ενσαρκωσις τȣ υιȣ, ἡ ανακεφαλαιωσις, ἡ προνοια, ἡ εκλογη, και κρισις, &c. In hisce omnibus Ecclesia modestiam et sobrietatem servat—acquiescens testimonio divino, qualitatem rerum imperceptibilium non scrutans. Contra quidam αυθαδεις, et inflati carnali sapientia in illa ingrediuntur, quæ scrutari est nefas, et propter ακαταληψιαν suam divinorum mysteriorum fidem labefactant: non cogitantes se homines esse, et in terra positos, nec Deum comprehendere, et ne ipsi quidem quomodo sint, aut quid sint, et quomodo vivant, intelligere! Certè, et id Ratio docet, multa in Dei infinitate et consilio ejus latere, quæ ipsa per se assequi non possit; Deoque dignum esse ea revelare quæ captum nostrum superant.

salvation. Every false estimate, we make, is owing antecedently to a wrong Judgment: which, even in the things, that relate to the transitory enjoyments of this life, may prove fatal to our happiness;—how cautious then should we be, not to be misguided in those, where a mistake may admit of no remedy, for ever!

What is right Reason, but to entertain such views, and to be governed by such principles of divine rectitude, as shall effectually possess us of *a right Spirit*—or, a Temper, that is regulated by those precepts, which shall assimilate us to the only Model of perfection, that ever assumed the human form, for the sublime purposes of exhibiting, and promoting, the most exalted measures of Piety, Virtue, and Benevolence.

What is right Reason, in short, but that, which alone can conduct and preserve us in *the good and the right Way*—instruct us to *speak right things*—and direct us *to do*

that which is *good and right in the sight of the Lord.* It is a mighty easy thing to prate about a certain jumble of ideas, which are compounded together with a certain set of terms, as unintelligible to the Million, as a foreign tongue, and then to call it, Philosophy*. But, nothing is,

* It is no less easy, and much less liberal, to call people by very disgusting and offensive names, which shall serve to render them odious to mankind—as if they must be *enthusiastic*, and *fanatical*, if they do not fall down and worship the two great Idols, of *Reason* and *Philosophy*, which a World of ignorance, infidelity, and vice, has agreed to set up. But, let any person wade through "Cudworth's intellectual System"—and he must surely be convinced of the distractions, and miseries, of the human Mind, under the guidance of *such* Directors: and then, let him follow it, with an attentive perusal of "Gale's Court of the Gentiles"—to learn, what Adepts they are in perverting the glimmering traditional rays of sacred Truth, to the deplorable purposes of Polytheism. After this, shall we be defamed, and ridiculed, because we never sacrifice in the Temples of Philosophy, and Reason? Yet, such is the Candour and Charity of those, who make the loudest boast of these *convenient*, not to say, artificial Virtues. As they are generally understood, they seem indeed to possess a strange kind of magick and incantation; but, when they come to be scrutinized, they are fit only for a niche in the Pantheon of ancient Greece,

in truth, Philosophy, but right Reason: nor any thing right Reason, in the most refined and valuable definition of it, than that, which I have here attempted faintly to delineate in its great outline: nor would it be any dishonour to the highest Talents, to display it to much greater advantage*.

Si quid novisti rectius istis
Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum.

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or modern Gaul. Charity and Candour are excellent things; only let them be assayed by divine Revelation—before they are suffered to pass current. Otherwise, and in our view,

" 'Tis a pageant,
" To keep us in false gaze."

* If this be a true state of things, how many are there among us, of brilliant Intellects, of exalted attainments in Literature, and of high Respectability in the estimation of men, who are nevertheless *deranged*; if, to be disordered in their senses, and out of their *right Mind*, be Synonymous! For, can there be any material difference between the Mens recta, and the recta Ratio? " How much are those persons mistaken, who imagine, that a Madman is necessarily incapable of composing orations, as ardent as those of Demosthenes, and odes, as sublime as those of Pindar! How small a portion of the persons, who, upon some topic or other are unhinged in their intellectual

But alas! may not right Reason, according to this statement—which indeed

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comprehension, is it necessary to place under corporal restraint!"

"Great Wit to madness nearly is allied—"

says our philosophic Poet: and I, who am neither Poet nor Philosopher, will venture to add, and little wit too; not omitting the intermediate gradations between very great and very little. Exempli gratia. Do we not say, that men are *mad*, when they fancy themselves, and the things about them, to be different from what they really are? They are said to be Fools too, when they mistake the value of things. If this be true—and who will question it? it may serve to shew us, that Man, in his present state of disorder and ignorance, must appear, in the eye of infinite Reason, both as *a fool*, and as *mad:* for, till he is brought to his right Mind, by the operation of divine Grace, he imagines himself, and every thing about him, to be *what they are not.* Is it any marvel then, that he should act against the Truth, or Reason, of things?"

"Christianity is the Remedy, or Cure, which GOD, who is Wisdom and Reason itself, has provided for this wretched infatuation, this worst of all, this *moral Insanity*, And, as sure as there is such a Being, so sure is it, that a Religion from God has only reasonable commands to reasonable creatures. Every duty or virtue of the christian Life is founded in *Truth*, and *Reason*—and is required, not merely because God has a Power to command what he pleases, but, because of its Fitness to be done; whether that fitness meet our idea, or no."

contains only so many hints—be classed among the rarities and curiosities of this world? And is it not owing to a careless, universal, and inexcusable inattention to such hints, that it abounds with so much

FALSE REASONING*?"

I mean, as to the several particulars submitted in these sheets to the public eye. For, false reasoning, in application to inferior concerns, is, in its consequence, comparatively immaterial. What boots it to my real Dignity, true Virtue, and essential Bliss, whether I reason well or ill upon the ptolemaic, tychonic, or newtonian systems—upon the literary genius of

* False reasoning, generally considered, is that operation of the Mind, which contradicts either Truth, or Fact, by some specious and delusive sophistry, which it makes use of for that purpose: as when a philosopher would persuade me to believe, that there are no external and visible objects of *Sense*; or, that it is absurd to suppose, that, what is three in one view, may be one in a very different view: or, that there is no other difference between virtue and vice, but what custom, or the civil magistrate, has established!

Homer, Plato, Demosthenes, or Tully—upon the merits or demerits of any ancient or modern Hero—or, upon the advantages and disadvantages of the different Forms of political Government, and Constitutions? These are all ingenious trifles. But, who can tell how much may be at stake, should I reason ill in matters of *eternal* Interest *?

How many are there, for instance, who deem it *rational*, totally to reject that

* This must inevitably be the case with any person, who does not study sacred Science; which is the lowest of all pursuits, in the calculation of *Men of rank and fashion*, and the last, with every *Man of the world*. Is this religious? Is this rational? or, are these the Characters we should either respect for their understanding, or propose for our imitation? Let us hear the judgment of a Writer, who might have divided a considerable portion of his Genius, Taste, and Intelligence, among fifty such *Things*, as these, and yet have retained more than they usually possess. He is speaking of that branch of Learning, which is indeed the only *wisdom*, as well as the essence of all literary enjoyments, when he calls it "that Learning, which the former times were not so blessed as to know—*sacred and inspired Divinity*—the sabbath and port of all men's labours and peregrinations." BACON.

plan of Salvation, which we have supposed to have been devised in the counsels of Heaven! How many, even to ridicule all those overtures of Grace, Mercy, and Peace, which constitute the vital parts, the very essence of Christianity! How many, to scorn the very idea of reposing all our hope of everlasting felicity upon the mediatorial undertaking of The Messiah! And, why so? "It is not *rational*—it is not *philosophical*"—say they: and flatter themselves that they reason aright*!

* It should be noted, in the strongest manner, that this is not merely false reasoning, but, as we may have an opportunity of proving more fully in another place, the most perilous, and fatal, a Man can possibly indulge—when it is tried by the uncorrupted principles of Revelation. Such indeed have been the perversions and blasphemies of human Reason, that, as extremes naturally produce each other, Ignorance and Fanaticism have misled some infatuated persons, to decry it *in toto*, and without any discrimination at all between the use and abuse of it: though no man ever made a more exalted application of his rational powers than St. Paul. That great Apostle would not be very ambitious, I apprehend, of *such* disciples.

What multitudes are there, who confidently affirm—O impudentiam audacem! that it is more *rational*, to disbelieve the doctrines, of the Trinity—the vicarious sacrifice and obedience of the Redeemer—and the divine influences of the Holy Spirit upon the human Mind and Heart; and, that none but Bigots, Enthusiasts, mere Ecclesiastics, or characters of the like stamp, will ever defend them! And yet, if *human Reason* is to be the *Criterion*, *Standard*, or *Measure*, of revealed truth, all this may be justified.

Under the same unconscious influence of intellectual pride and depravity, there is, what a pious and elegant Historian called, a Gens, ratione furens, who talk a language with the utmost coolness, which ought to shock every man, who has not cultivated the Arts of blasphemy, and arrogance; and who, having taken leave of all moral delicacy, may be said to "glory in their shame." These are the Writers,

who tell us of *a Fitness of things**, by which, the conduct of the incomprehensi-

* The deliberate blasphemy, which has been obtruded on the world, under the sanction of what have been deemed great and learned authorities, respecting a certain figment, which they have styled, "the Nature, and Reason, and Fitness of things," can never be exploded with indignation too ardent. For, has it not been exhibited to us as a decisive Test, by which the proceedings of infinite Wisdom are to be *tried?* as a Rule, by which the Doctrine and Character of divine Revelation itself are to be *determined?*

In the same incautious spirit have we been taught by others, that, "the Scriptures offer much better grounds of Virtue, and Morals than any System, that ever appeared:" whereas, we ought to know, that they furnish the *only* grounds; and other Systems, which every man is at perfect liberty to prefer, or reject, as he pleases, none at all. Upon this account, the person, who contributes in the least degree, to confirm, and illustrate, these Scriptures, deserves better of mankind than all the moralists of reason in the world: because, there is no Foundation for Religion, Virtue, or Morality, but in Revelation. Neither will the sacred Oracles of truth be justly estimated, or duly prized, till this Principle is firmly established in the mind. Surely, if we are favoured with the τα Λογια τϑ Θεϑ, "The Oracles of God," it is very meet and right, that Nature, Reason, and Philosophy, should all rally around them, and rejoice to listen to their dictates, with silent, humble, persevering submission. Instead of which, we are very gravely, and very impiously, instructed to sit in judgment

ble Godhead is to be examined, and decided! that nothing is to be accredited, as of divine Authority, till it has passed the Touchstone, or Ordeal, of human Reason! that Salvation by Grace through faith is to be rejected, as arrant nonsense, if it accord not with our ideas of Philosophy! If this be not cum ratione insanire,

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upon them! Whereas, "on these mysterious points, which human Reason can never fathom; it is in vain that we make that Reason the Umpire. That finite man, however, can form no adequate conception of these great Truths; by no means implies either absurdity or impossibility in the things themselves. This circumstance arises from the limited nature of our faculties. Christianity does not propose to mankind a theological Code, encumbered with no difficulties, involved in no perplexities. Its great mysterious doctrines are not to be solved by the light of Nature, nor scanned by the boldest flight of human Intellect. The Word of God is the sole Basis of the proofs, and solutions, of these stupendous doctrines. The Almighty has been pleased to erect mounds and ramparts, as of old at Sinai, around the abode of his incomprehensible Majesty, to ward off the dangerous curiosity of man: he hath wrapped himself in clouds, that we might not be consumed by the full blaze of that glory, which invests the eternal throne."

what is*? Where is the Man of well-applied Intellect, and religious Modesty, who, upon hearing, and reading, of such *monsters* of *rational* production, is not reminded of the pandæmoniac Conclave in the regions below, so inimitably etched by our immortal Milton? Were the platonic idea of the pre-existence of human souls admissible, I should suspect, that

* Certain it is, and it might, I think, be made apparent to demonstration, that many persons, of the highest repute for Learning, and Philosophy, I do not say Wisdom, have, in their studious hours, and with the calmest temper imaginable, published works, which they have presumed to call *religious*, abounding with indirect attacks on the natural, as well as moral, attributes of the Deity! They have taken upon them to inform us, what he *could*, and what he *could not*, do. They have told us of his being governed by a sort of φαντασματα, which they call the eternal and immutable Relations of Things! They have, to my comprehension at least, meditated the most serious assaults on the *Rights of the Deity!* and pleaded the very Reason, he has conferred upon them, for treating the GLORIOUS GODHEAD with the most degrading familiarity! for despoiling him of his absolute and uncontrollable Sovereignty, at one time, and of his infinite Power and Knowledge at another! I could wish to cure such Characters of their literary Tumours, by sending them to Job. xxxviii. 1——12. Is. xl. 12——17. Dan.

such Rationalists were disguised Emissaries from that quarter. O for the spear of Ithuriel, to unmask their specious infamy, and present it to mankind in its true colours! It requires indeed no moderate share of mental hardihood, to contend either with Belial, or Beelzebub—to say nothing of "their matchless Chief, the Author of all ill *."

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iv. 34——37. If the contemplation of these passages does not bring them to their *right mind*, of deep humility and self-nothingness, they must be delivered over to the class of *Incurables*.

* Our immortal Poet has represented this prime Heresiarch, as employed in this mischievous business, when discovered by the two celestial Messengers in Paradise—

"Him there they found
"Squat like a toad, close at the ear of EVE;
"Assaying, by his devilish art, to reach
"The organs of her Fancy, and with them forge
"Illusions, as he list, phantoms and dreams;
"Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
"Blown up with *high conceits, engend'ring Pride.*
"Him, thus intent, *Ithuriel* with his spear
"Touch'd lightly. . . . . Up he starts,
"Discover'd and surpris'd; in his own shape,
"A FIEND."

In a similar spirit of apostate impiety, it has been said, that Revelation has commanded us to do nothing more than what by the force of Reason we are able to perform! This is intended to preclude the absolute necessity of divine Grace, and Influence. The fact is, that, it does not belong to Reason to enable us to perform any moral action: though it either is, or may be, capacitated to discover, both what actions ought to be done, and wherein their moral excellence consists*. In general, however, we shall

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See too the character of his two Compeers, drawn by the same unrivall'd Pencil, in Book 2. You will find them both "cloath'd with words in *Reason's* garb."

* Let his beautiful lines stand under this article, and I have no contest with the celebrated Poet of the Night: in this view he might very confidently repel the groundless pretences to superior rationality, which our Infidels assume.

"Wrong not the Christian; think not Reason yours;
"'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear:
"'Tis Reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents:
"'Tis Reason's voice obey'd, his glories crown;
"To give lost Reason life, he pour'd his own.
"BELIEVE—and shew the Reason of a Man.
"BELIEVE—and look with triumph on the tomb."

find, that it is blinded by Ignorance—perverted by Prejudice—and corrupted by Passion. To this, it is owing, that "the rational powers of the strongest minds have been so misapplied, that giants have employed themselves in picking straws; and men, whose intellectual sight might be compared to that of Lyncæus, have wandered about, always professing to be in search of truth—seldom finding it out—and often mistaking even error itself for it."

The only Remedy, that can be devised for these false methods of reasoning, and philosophizing, is, firmly to adhere to the Word of Revelation. "Reason, it is agreed, is extremely useful, if not indispensably requisite, to establish the divine origin of that Revelation: but, when the truth of it is once established, we are to believe implicitly: the use of Reason ceases—her interposition grows impertinent—and nothing can be more absurd, than to appeal to her, when she has transferred us to

the superior tuition of Faith; or, to rest upon her, where she has nothing to do. Many of the public Teachers of Christianity seem not to know, or very strangely to forget, that Reason, improperly used, becomes a much better weapon of offence in the hands of their enemies, than of defence in theirs; as many of their writings may demonstrate *."

* Under this head, of false reasoning, I may include at least two thirds of the particular species of *Biblical criticism*, which may be inserted among the discriminative characteristics of the last Age; and which, I fear, upon weighing it calmly in the balance of Revelation, will eventually operate as injuriously to the cause of christian Truth, as the deistical Writings. In my judgment, and premising this acknowledged maxim, that, πασα γραφη θεοπνευστος, it borders very much upon one kind of *Blasphemy*—encouraged, though it be, by those I need not name. Tace, si sapias. Rouse not a Scorpion, lest he sting you to death. Thus much, however, I will venture to say to almost all our modern Critics, that, in the application of their Talent to "The Ark of God," they should approach it with veneration, and humility, and touch it with a pious caution. Instead of which, they treat it with as much licentious freedom, as they would the works of Homer, Æschylus, Euripides, Sallust, or Juvenal!

Audax hominum genus, Criticorum natio est, nihil sibi non in omnes et omnia permissum esse temerariâ præ-

To make some little amends for all these disgusting specimens of false reasoning, let us now attempt only a single specimen of, what I would willingly flatter myself will be pronounced,

JUST REASONING.

I lay it down as an incontrovertible Maxim in my own mind, that just rea-

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sumtione fingens! Nihil vel profanum, vel sacrum est, quod violentas ipsorum manus evadat! Postquam superbientis animi lubidinem in secularibus scriptis malè multandis—ipsi corrigere vocant—expleverunt; pari confidentiâ in sanctissimorum oraculorum arcana volumina involant. Quorum orationem, addendo, demendo, transponendo, fingunt ac refingunt pro lubitu. Ea tamen artis suæ fiducia, ut non minora in Mosem et Davidem, in Petrum et Paulum ausi sint, quam in Polybium, et Livium, in Aristophanem, et Plautum! O indignam neque ferendam cœlestibus viris contumeliam! Non decet enimvero, non decet hominem christianum in exigendo sanctorum vatum sermone ad omnes Grammaticorum vel Dialecticorum regulas nimis esse scrupulosum. Constat orationi sacræ suâ sapientiâ, et, vel invitis istis magistellis, constabit æternum; quamvis jejuna scholarum præcepta, velut infra sublimitatem suam posita, securè despiciat.

soning is always consistent with Truth; and that, Truth is always in harmony with itself. I am aware, therefore, that, in objection to every thing that has been advanced in the preceding *Assertions*, it will be urged by those, who dispute them, either that the Scriptures contradict themselves, or else, that I have contradicted them. For that, if Justification be an inclusive branch of Salvation—which it certainly must be—there is a passage, which positively affirms, that, "A man is justified by works, and not by Faith only." Is it not incumbent then on those, who profess themselves the disinterested Advocates of the christian Verity, to demonstrate that the inspired penmen, who seem indeed to oppose each other, are perfectly in unison—if we mean to be determined by *sense*, instead of *sound?*

To this end, it will be previously necessary to settle certain obvious prelimina-

ries: such as these; which evidently belong to the class of Aphorisms. If the sacred writings, as we call them, are indeed contradictory, they can deserve no serious attention. If the persons, who are said to have been inspired, do *really* oppugn each other, we are authorized to conclude, that they were Impostors. If two Apostles, adopting the same terms, which *appear* to be diametrically repugnant, do certainly mean one and the same thing, in the use of those terms, we are at liberty to renounce the doctrine of one, or both; as the fair consideration of circumstances may decide: but, if it be possible to reconcile them together, that seems to be the dictate of right Reason, and the most satisfactory to honest and ingenuous Minds. And, this is the Position, we mean to establish—that, *they are perfectly reconcileable**.

* The principal use, and excellence, of the powers of reasoning, is, as I apprehend, to connect and arrange both language, and argument, *according to Truth*; so as to pre-

For this purpose, we argue, that they are not treating of *the same Faith*; nor, of *the same Justification;* nor, of *the same Works.* St. Paul, it is true, is insisting,

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sent it in the clearest, strongest, and fullest light. It may be prostituted in the Senate, and at the Bar, to inferior purposes of Interest, and Policy: but, this is unpardonable, when we are speaking and writing as moral Agents, on moral Themes. The power of reasoning is indeed justly accounted one of the prerogatives of human Nature; it is, however, like all other intellectual Talents—only valuable as it is properly applied; and never so well applied, as in promoting and establishing Truth and Virtue. "For the interests of *Truth*, and *Virtue*, can never be found in opposition. Darkness and Error may befriend Vice, but can never be favourable to virtue." And, as every man is bound to employ the faculties, which God has given him, to the best purposes, I flatter myself, that mine will be so engaged in the present instance: in which, what is truth—what is right—and what is good, appear—and only appear—to be in unprecedented self-contradiction. We must not suffer the Truth of God, like the ancient Janus, to wear two faces: though there are some, who object not to its being disfigured, as that heathen idol was sometimes represented, with four heads. *Such* is *their* love of Truth, that they have no great aversion to her bitterest Foe! and they even imagine, that they can worship "The God of truth," with acceptance, in the Temple of error!

that, "we are justified by Faith, without the deeds of the Law." St. James, it is no less true, that, "A man is justified by works, and not by Faith only." How shall we get rid of this great difficulty? There never was a crisis, perhaps, in which just reasoning was either more necessary, or more valuable: nor is there any case, in which the advantages of sound Logic recommend themselves to our esteem with greater effect.

Observe then, I entreat you, that St. Paul is speaking upon all occasions of *a Faith*, for which he most ardently contends; because, everlasting Salvation is inseparably connected with it, by the irreversible Decree of Heaven*: a Faith,

* Rom. iii. 25, 26. Sanguis Christi est objectum Fidei, et velut medicamentum, cujus virtute sanamur, et Deo reconciliamur: *Fides* est medium, per quod virtus medicamenti hujus in hominibus operatur; et causa organica, quâ sola propitiationem accipimus in Christo; δια της πιστεως . . . Ut fit IPSE justificans eum, qui est ex *Fide* Jesu; hoc est, qui per fidem Christum amplexus est . . . Ubi igitur Gloriatio? Exclusa est. Quia justi-

which carries along with it a conviction of sacred truth to the Heart; which realizes and substantiates divine and unseen things to the Soul; which is fully persuaded of the Promises of God—embraces them—and acts upon them: which, as we have already shewn, worketh by Love; giveth the victory over the World; sanctifieth the whole Man—and is implanted within him, not only as the Instrument of all his hope, peace, and happiness in Christ Jesus, but, as the vital Principle of all *christian* Piety, Virtue, and Excellence *.

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tiam Deus dat, non per laborem, non per opera, sed, per Fidem. Hæc sanandi ratio et homines modestissimos facit, et Deo summè gloriosa est; χαριν ευρειν εναντιον Κυριε τω Θεω μηδεν Προτερον εργασαμενον.

* There may be a superstitious and pharisaical Piety; there may be a fictitious and counterfeit Virtue; and there may be some physical and constitutional Excellencies, which may impose upon the ignorant and undiscerning: but, what we mean, by *christian*, is altogether of a different genus. Horace and Juvenal might write of Virtue; but they had no more conception of what a mind illuminated by divine Grace understands by it, than I have of the precise mode in which celestial Spirits communicate their thoughts to each other.

St. Paul is treating entirely and alone of the *Justification* of a guilty Criminal in the sight of God, as the moral Governour of the world, and as bound to maintain the rights of his Godhead, the dignity of his Government, and the honour of his Law, before the whole intelligent Universe *. The Question, therefore, which

* The whole christian System proceeds radically on the following Principles, that, " the great God, the Creator, Preserver, and moral Governour of the world, is an absolutely perfect, an infinitely glorious, and amiable Being, and therefore infinitely worthy of the supreme love, honour, and obedience of his rational Creatures: that, the divine Law, which requires this of us, on pain of eternal death, is a holy, just, and good Law—worthy to be kept, and magnified, to the honour of the divine Government: and that, the Design of the mediatorial Undertaking of the Son of God incarnate, was, to do honour to the divine Lawgiver, his Law, and Government, by opening a way, in which " He might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

" There can therefore be no medium between the ancient apostolic Christianity, and direct Infidelity. Nor can any thing exceed the danger, to which they are exposed, who, in attempting to reduce it to the standard of Reason, shall dare to subvert or pervert it. He, who alters it in a single point, must alter the whole, and substitute a system of Falsehood, in the place of a system of divine Truth." Nothing can be added to it, or taken

he undertook to state, and to answer, in those epistles, which more immediately respect this great Point, is, "How then shall Man be *justified with God?*" And, after having argued the matter with the most logical accuracy, what is his final conclusion? Ingenuously examine for yourself: consult his own words, in Rom. iii. 19——28 *.

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from it, without a presumptuous and profane impeachment of *the Wisdom of God.*

* It was this doctrine, as argued and delivered by St. Paul, which the immortal Luther used to call, Articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesiæ: that Luther, who was wont to say, "I am accused of rudeness and immodesty, particularly by my adversaries, who have not a grain of candour and good-manners. If, as they say, I am saucy and impudent, I am, however, simple, open, and sincere, and have none of their guile, dissimulation, and sophistry."—Peradventure, the effeminate elegance, and classic fastidiousness, of our literary Fops, may be exquisitely shocked at the following instance of what their delicate refinement will pronounce, barbarism—

"I Martin Luther, an unworthy Preacher of the Gospel, and Servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, assert and firmly believe, that this Article of Justification by Faith without the works of the Law, is what neither CÆSAR,

As to *the Works*, against which this unrivalled Apostle, and Martyr for the cause of Christianity, is so repeatedly protesting, and which he utterly excludes from the least share in our Salvation, can any person be so weak, or so wicked, as to imagine, that he means to protest against the practice of any good works, properly so called? It cannot be *imagined*, by those, who understand his Character; though he was *slanderously* and *basely* misrepresented, as an Advocate for the most abandoned of all Maxims—"Let us do evil, that good may come." No; the works which he detested, and abhorred, were those of *Self-recommendation*, *Self-confidence*, *Self-justification*; the works, which engender our spiritual pride, and

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Turk, nor Tartar—nor the POPE, with all his Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, and Monks—nay, nor all the DEVILS, shall ever be able to overthrow."—To these may be added, if you please, our modern Critics, Sophists, and Seducers. Magna est Veritas—and, notwithstanding the Powers, by which it is opposed—the Arts, by which it is attacked—and the Teachers, by which it is disguised—PRÆVALEBIT.

foster our vain conceit; works, which he unreservedly declares are so far from being acceptable to God, or conciliating his favour, that, they provoke his wrath, and incur his curse. Gal. iii. 10. But, as for those works of righteousness, and *true* holiness, which necessarily flow out of a living and lively Faith in the Mediator, and humbly preserve their due order, their appointed place in the grand Scheme of Redemption, what zeal could be more fervid than his, in promoting, and enforcing them, upon principles, the most pure—upon motives, the most sublime *?

* Allowing this Article of Justification, or Salvation, by Faith, to constitute the very Hinge, on which the christian system may be said to turn, how gratifying must it be to *Infidelity*, to see the professional Advocates for Revelation perpetually opposing each other, with the utmost virulence, in their mode of interpreting it! May they not very naturally conclude, that the most essential point in our Religion is so obscure, or involved in such difficulties, as to be really unintelligible? when equal Talents, and, *apparently*, equal Piety, are so strenuous in defending opinions diametrically repugnant to each other—on a topic of such importance? How can the disinterested Friends of sacred Truth rest satisfied, till something is

Let us now turn our attention, for a little, to St. James, and inquire, whether there is the smallest degree of collision between them. I ask then, what is the kind of *Faith*, which he is very deservedly exposing? I appeal to the Reader—to his conscience, and his honesty. Is it not clearly a speculative, notional, and profes-

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effectually done, to rescue this argument against them—which is no trifling one—from the mouths of their enemies! Why suffer them to remain possessed of such a strong-hold?—We say—and justly too—that, "there is one Lord, one Hope, *one Faith:*" but, where, says the Infidel, is this *Unity of the faith* to be found? Some indeed, who profess the highest esteem for The Messiah, and his Religion, have cut the knot, and settled the matter very easily—much more like Infidels, than Christians—by stating, that *Practice* is every thing; and *Creeds*, or *Doctrines*, of very little or no consequence! I am not endued with powers of language to express my astonishment, and horror, at such a sentiment of *Blasphemy:* nor am I at all ambitious of that counterfeit Candour, or Charity, which would exhibit it in colours less odious than the term I have industriously applied to it. I have laboured, in these strictures, to call every thing by its *proper* name. Is. v. 20, 21, 24. Be it observed, however, I have no contest with *persons*—only, with *errors:* I war not with *men*, but with *falsehood*, and *imposture*.

sional Faith? is it not a dead, inactive, fruitless Faith? is it not such a Faith, as the Devils themselves may have? Can *this* be the justifying, saving Faith of God's elect? You might as well suppose, that a Man is alive, when his Spirit has departed from his body.

But, what is the *Justification*, of which this Apostle is treating? In no respect, of the Justification of a guilty creature at the bar, or in the sight, of God; but, of the justification of our Faith, and our Profession, *before men*. His demand is, that we should shew *them* our Faith, by our works; to let our light shine before *them*, that they may see our good works; to prove to *them* the sincerity of our religion; and not to *say*, that we have Faith, without giving any satisfactory evidence of its truth, and reality.

What again are *the Works*, in requisition with this Apostle? of what nature? Can

there be any question, but that they are such as are consequential of Faith; its fruits, and effects? Are they not like those of Abraham, "the father of the faithful, and the friend of God?" the works of those, who are already justified by believing, as he was, and who are in a State of grace, and salvation? For, all other works, however splendid their appearance to the human eye, are "*dead works*" in the judgment of him, who seeth not as man seeth. For, the Lord pondereth *the Heart*, and trieth *the Spirits*. Rev. iii. 1.

To all this, it might with the strictest propriety be added, and should be noticed, that these two Apostles are addressing very different *Characters:* the former, such as were totally ignorant of, if not inimical to, the only possible Way of justification, and salvation, and were therefore seeking those inestimable blessings, by their personal obedience—"as it were, by the works of the Law:" the latter, such

as professed to understand it, and to be perfectly acquainted with it, while they were perverting and abusing it, and deceiving their own selves. He therefore calls them "*vain men,*" who with all their idle boast of Faith, were neither devoted to God, nor merciful to the destitute. So far were they from being altogether, that they were not almost, Christians. Gal. vi. 3, 4.

I know not whether I may have been able to present this το εναντιοφανες, "this seeming contradiction," with the same luminous aspect in which it appears to my own mind. Would to God I could! that this painful contest, so dishonourable to Religion, might be for ever silenced, and closed. Persuaded I am, that all, who love the truth, for the truth's sake, must sigh, in secret, for that happy moment. This however is rather to be wished, than expected, so long, as Ignorance will not be learned, nor understand; Prejudice will not suffer itself to be corrected; and

Pride remains unsubdued by the humiliating genius of Christianity.

Learned men, you may perhaps have noticed, have a fond partiality to see things represented in their own way. They can hardly conceive it possible, that any thing stated in linguâ vernacula can appear to so great advantage, or come with such force, or commendation, as when exhibited in a dead language: as if we, who stand on the shoulders of our Forefathers, whether of Greece, or Rome, could not be as argumentative, eloquent, or ingenious, in english, as they were in greek, and latin! I do not offer this as any specimen of their superior sagacity, or of their exalted mind—but, as a sufficient excuse for indulging them in so strange a fancy; and, for the purpose of humouring the whim, I have added the substance of what is here advanced, from the works of an Author, who for biblical Science, and Criticism, has hardly an Equal in our superficial times.

Quo pacto Jacobus cum Paulo conciliandus est? Non desunt qui nodum scindunt, hanc epistolam Jacobi, ut apocryphum, rejiciendo: sed, ab aliis hæc est Responsio. Distinguendum de *Operibus*, quæ aliter in Jacobo, aliter in Paulo, accipi volunt, quos nec uno modo explicant. Paulus intelligit opera Legis—hoc est, perfectam et perpetuam legis observationem, quæ debitum seu meritum parit, et Fidei in Christum opponitur; Jacobus autem opera intelligit ea, quæ fidem demonstrant, et ex fide oriuntur. Loquitur Paulus de operibus tantùm irregenitorum, sive quæ fidem Christi antecedunt, et ex sola legis cognitione oriuntur, et de ritualibus: Jacobus verò, de operibus fidem consequentibus, et ex fide pullulantibus, et a fide directis.

Distinguendum de voce, *Fidei*. Loquitur Paulus de fide verâ et vivâ, ut liquet; Jacobus autem de fide falsâ, vanâ, mortuâ, sterili, et otiosâ, quæ operibus caret;

ut facilè probatur—quòd Jacobus de illâ fide agit, quæ communis est reprobis, ipsisque dæmonibus.

Justificari Paulo, est, in judicio absolvi, et justum judicari coram tribunali Dei; Jacobo autem est, justum declarari coram hominibus.

Paulus, cum iis contendens, qui merita sua jactabant, disputat de ratione et causa justificationis, adversus falsas illius causas quas sibi constituerant; docetque, nos solâ fide justificari, et nec Gentes, nec Judæos, per opera moralia aut legalia ad veram justitiam pervenire posse; sed unicam ad illam esse viam fidem Christi—ideoquè totus in fidei commendationem incumbit: Jacobus autem adversus eos disserit, qui fidem crepabant dum sceleribus scaterent, et non operum modò justificationem, sed ipsa etiam opera, tollebant; et proinde, ut contraria prorsus erat controversia, ita contrario ordine disputat

de justificationis effectis, operibus scilicet; à quibus ascendit ad causam, ut Paulus contrà a causis ad effecta descendit, et ex quibus [effectis] fides et justificatio agnosci possunt.

Paulus loquitur, summatim, de foro Justitiæ, in quo nemo ex operibus justificatur. Ps. cxxx. 3. . cxliii. 2. . Rom. iv. 1, 2. . Jacobus, de foro Gratiæ, in quo viri sancti se ex operibus suis justificant. Ps. xviii. 21, 22, 23. Is. xxxviii. 3. Jac. ii. 18.

Concludimus igitur, nullam esse hac in parte Jacobo cum Paulo συρραξιν, sed summam concordiam. Nam, sive distinctio adhibeatur in voce Fidei, sive in verbo justificandi, sive in homine ipso, sive, quod malimus, in hisce tribus conjunctim, amicè inter se consentient. Discamus ab hinc, non sunt conjungenda, quæ Deus divisit, sed nec sunt dividenda, quæ Deus conjungit. Fidem ab operibus sejunxit *in negotio justificationis*—Opera cum

fide conjunxit *in vita justificati:* non possunt *coëfficere* justificationem—sed *coëxistere* tamen debent in justificato: non possunt justificationem obtinere *a priori*, ut merita, vel conditiones—sed possunt declarare et probare *a posteriori*, ut τεκμηρια; non conducunt ad salutem acquirendam—sed sunt *via regni*; non *causa regnandi.* Sequamur ergò hanc viam, ut tandem perveniamus ad patriam; quod faxit Deus pater clementissimus, Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus, cui sit laus, et gloria, in sæcula sæculorum *!

* An argument in plain *english*, is something: how much more forcible, in *latin!* in *greek*, it must increase, at least, in a triple ratio: what then must be the advantage to the world, if any of our Scholars would produce us a system of Logic, in *hebrew!* That would eclipse Aristotle himself. Ah! si fas dicere! But, we must not offend the great Masters of human Science: who, for that, have neglected "THE LIGHT of THE WORLD" himself.

Sed quid opus teneras mordaci reddere vero
Auriculas? Vide sis, ne majorum tibi fortè
Limina frigescant. PERSII SAT.

After all; this Writer is so fearful of being thought vain, and pedantic himself, that, for the sake of the unlettered Reader, he wishes it to be particularly noticed, that

For the complete annihilation of this perplexing dispute, I have now contributed my offering*. Quod potui, feci.

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there is nothing introduced here, in a dead language, but what is to be found in his own tongue. There are no *secrets*, in the greek and latin sentences: only, they express the same thing, either in a more concise, or in a more elegant, phraseology.

* Some there are, who would put a final period to this lamentable dispute among our public Teachers, by utterly extinguishing the great doctrine, of *Justification by faith*, from the christian System! *Extinguish the Sun!* How much more like a Father of the Church, in a much purer age, did a Prelate of these times express himself, when he said to his Clergy, "That Man is justified by Faith, without the works of the Law, was the uniform doctrine of the first Reformers. It is a far more ancient doctrine; it was the doctrine of the whole College of the Apostles. It is more ancient still: it was the doctrine of the Prophets. It is older than the Prophets: it was the religion of the Patriarchs."—Shall we then be so contemptible, as to give up the doctrine, the faith, the religion of Apostles, Prophets, and Patriarchs, to the ignorance and conceit of some modern *Adventurers* in Theology, and *rational* Christianity?

So long as some of our Doctors obstinately persevere, in opposing this fundamental Position of the Bible, let us "call no man, Master, upon earth:" let us look to an higher Teacher. Quæ verò totius Ecclesiæ apostolicæ fides fuerit, non aliunde, si a sacris Litteris recesseris,

And, to me it is demonstrable, that the inspired Penmen, who must have been otherwise misconceived, or misrepresented, are walking hand in hand—not indeed

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melius cognoscas, quam ex *Clementis Romani*, qui Pauli nostri Cooperarius fuit, ad Corinthios epistolâ. Παντες εν εδοξασθησαν και εμεγαλυνθησαν δι' αυτων, η των εργων αυτων, η της δικαιοπραγιας ης ενειργασαντο, αλλα δια τε Θεληματος αυτε. Και ημεις εν δια τε Θεληματος αυτε εν Χριςῳ Ιησε κλεθεντες, δι' εαυτων δικαιεμεθα, ουδε δια της ημετερας σοφιας, η ευσεβειας, η εργων ων κατειργασαμεθα εν οσιοτητι καρδιας, αλλα δια της Πιςεως, δι' ης παντας τες απ' αιωνος ὁ παντοκρατωρ Θεος εδικαιωσεν· ᾧ εςω δοξα εις τες αιωνος των αιωνων· αμην. "Ii ergo omnes [loquitur de prisci Testamenti fidelibus] gloriam et amplitudinem consecuti sunt, non per se ipsos, aut opera sua, aut justas actiones, quas fecerunt; sed *per Voluntatem ejus.* Et nos igitur ex *Voluntate illius in Christo Jesu* vocati, non per nos ipsos justi efficimur, neque per sapientiam nostram, aut intelligentiam, aut pietatem, aut *Opera quæ in cordis sanctitate operati sumus*—sed, PER FIDEM: per quam cunctos, qui unquam justi fuerint, justificavit DEUS omnipotens. Cui sit Gloria in sæcula sæculorum. Amen."—

Nihil igitur a peccatore Deus unquam requirit, nullum prorsùs actum, cujuscunque sit generis, quo ipse sibi *Jus* ad salutem comparat, nisi Fidem. Hoc Christus acquisivit et meruit suis, perfectissimè; ideoque unica *Justificatio*, de qua Paulus agit, est *adjudicatio Juris*, unice per Christum parti: idcirco, neque conversio, aut resipiscentia, neque sanctitatis studium, neque nova vita, ad acquirendam talem sententiam valent.

agreeing, as some have done, to *compound* Truth and Falshood, but—in perfect unanimity of sentiment, and in most cordial affection to the divine Verity; and, upon that ground only, to each other*.

To render this dissertation as extensively useful as may be, I shall take leave to subjoin a few

GENERAL HINTS;

which may be adapted to various purposes of moral improvement.

1. Pretences and Professions of Faith are very easy, and very common. Our business is, to examine ourselves, whether

* Whence then all this unhappy contention, in reconciling these two Apostles? For, "what is more plain, and easy to be understood, than this? that, St. Paul speaks of *justification before God*, and St. James of *justification before men:* that, *Faith* is the only Instrument of justification, appointed by God, but that *good works* are necessary to justify, or evidence, the reality of that Faith: and that, the *Character* and *Conduct* of every real Christian are entirely different from that of an Hypocrite, and Self-deceiver."

we be in "*the Faith*; the Faith of God's elect," as the Scriptures express it. 2. Cor. xiii. 5.

2. All fruitless Graces are Counterfeits; and therefore unprofitable, and vain. John xv. 5.

3. Where there is true Faith, there will be good works; but, the latter cannot exist without the former. Gal. v. 6.

4. A dead Faith is a false Faith*. Faith is the Life of the Soul, and ani-

* "An empty barren Faith is a *dead* Faith—because it may consist with a natural state, in which we are *dead in trespasses and sins*, and alive only to the world: because, it is destitute of the vivifying influence of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus: because, it is like a corrupt tree, which bringeth forth no good fruit: and, because it availeth nothing towards the attainment of eternal life. In short, it bringeth no glory to God—no *well-grounded* peace to the heart—no benefit to the necessitous—and is of no more use, than a dead body, when the spirit is fled. For works are as much the companions of Faith, as breathing is inseparable from animal life." Jam. ii. 26.

mateth the whole body of christian Obedience. Gal. ii. 20. Hebr. x. 38, 39.

5. The formal Assent to articles of Religion does not necessarily infer *saving* Faith. A man may be right in his opinion, whose practice is diametrically the reverse. True believing is more a Grace of the Heart, than an exercise of the Understanding. Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 9, 10. The Devils assent to articles of Faith. Jam. ii. 19.

6. All real Believers are bound to honour and justify their Faith, by their Works. Matt. iii. 16. . vii. 20. Luke viii. 15. John xv. 8.

7. Faith is the most excellent of all the Virtues; because, it humbles the Creature—it glorifies the divine Grace—and it promotes universal Holiness. Hebr. xi. . 12. 42. Non, quòd in Fide omnes sint virtutes, quas Deus requirit; sed,

quòd virtus maxima, cæterarumque est mater, et altrix.

" Learn hence, that Faith is Heaven's best gift of Grace;
" And love with fear the only God: learn too,
" To walk as in his presence, and on him
" Alone depend; that suff'ring for the Truth,
" Is fortitude to highest victory;
" And, to the faithful, death the gate of life.
" This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum
" Of Wisdom: hope no higher—though all the stars
" Thou know'st by name; and all th' ethereal pow'rs;
" All secrets of the Deep; all Nature's works—
" Or works of God in heav'n, air, earth, or sea;
" And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst;
" And all the rule, one empire: only add
" Deeds to thy knowledge answerable: add
" Virtue, Patience: then thou shalt possess
" A Paradise within thee—happier far
" Than all the Poets tell of Eden's bliss."

MILTON.

ASSERTION 5.

ALL, WHO ARE IN A STATE OF SALVATION, ARE, AS IT RESPECTS THAT STATE, THE WORKMANSHIP OF GOD, IN A PECULIAR SENSE.

" 'Tis REVELATION satisfies all doubts,
" Explains all mysteries, except her own,
" And so illuminates the path of life,
" That fools discover it, and stray no more.
" Now tell me, dignified and sapient Sir,
" My man of morals—nurtur'd in the shades
" Of Academus—is this false, or true?
" Is CHRIST the abler Teacher, or the Schools?
" Is Christ? Then why resort at ev'ry turn
" To Athens, or to Rome, for wisdom short
" Of Man's occasions—when in Him reside
" Grace, knowledge, comfort, an unfathom'd store!
" How oft, when Paul has serv'd us with a Text,
" Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully preach'd!
" Men, that if now alive, would sit content
" And humble Learners of a Saviour's worth—
" Preach it who might. Such was their love of Truth,
" Their thirst of Knowledge, and their Candour too."

Hic est ille JESUS, quem præstituit Deus placamentum per Fidem in sanguine ipsius, ut quisquis credit in eum non pereat, sed habeat vitam æternam. Et doctrina tantæ Salutis nuncia, ea demùm est quam EVANGELIUM vocamus. Quid enim hoc nuncio lætius, jucundiusque contingere potest homini criminum sibi suorum conscio, anxioque Salutis? Neque metuendum cuiquam est, ne in excessu gaudii peccat: nam evangelica Veritas sanctitatem eximiam et doceat, et urgeat, et reipsa mentibus inspiret,

It is a circumstance extremely unaccountable in the character of many of our public Teachers, that they do not seem to have discovered, in the history of the human Mind, either the intellectual or moral utility of having clear and accurate conceptions: to convey which, ought indeed to be their primary object—if it be true, that, "Nothing can be relished, but in proportion as it is understood *."

* An approved Philosopher has observed well, that, "He, who hath Words of any language, without distinct ideas in his Mind, to which he applies them, does, so far as he uses them in his discourse, only make a noise, without any sense, or signification: and how learned soever he may seem, by the use of hard terms, is not much more learned thereby in Knowledge, than he would be in Learning, who had nothing in his Study but the bare Titles of books, without possessing the contents of them."

This indeed is the first step in sound Logic, or the right use of Reason. For, without distinct ideas, how can there be any clear Definitions either of terms, or things; or any accurate perception of Truth itself? Never therefore rest satisfied with mere words, which have no ideas belonging to them—that is, no settled and determinate ideas. Deal not in such empty ware—whether you are a Learner, or a Teacher: for, hereby some have

I adopt this Maxim myself, with entire cordiality; and, therefore, perfectly agree to the subsequent remarks, obviously founded upon it. "It is not enough to have a confused perception of something in general: unless the Mind has *a distinct* perception, it will be capable of very little*. This is a thing of so much conse-

made themselves rich in words, and learned in their own esteem; whereas in reality their Understandings have been poor, and they knew nothing.

* Herein consists the great utility of Definition; which indeed appears the only, as well as the beſt, mode, that can be adopted by those, who mean to communicate clear ideas, in order to real Inſtruction. For the indistinct perception of a Thing is not, properly speaking, Knowledge. "But, if men would tell plainly what ideas they make their Words stand for, there could not be half that wrangling, or obscurity, in the search, or support, of Truth, that there now is." LOCKE.

"As there is not a more plentiful Source of fallacies in reasoning," says the judicious Reid, "than men's using the same word sometimes in one sense, and sometimes in another, the best means of preventing such fallacies, or of detecting them, when they are committed, is, Definitions of words as accurate as they can be given."—Rant, rhapsody, and enthusiasm, have an insuperable aversion to clear ideas, and definitive terms. We need not assign the cause.

quence, that, so far as this Faculty is in itself dull, or not rightly made use of, for the distinguishing one thing from another, so far are our Notions confused, and our Reason and Judgment disturbed, or misled.

" By obtaining clear conceptions, and by being accustomed to give an accurate account of the conceptions it acquires, the Mind becomes habituated to TRUTH; at the same time that the distance, between truth, and falshood, becomes in such minds actually enlarged, and the difficulty of departing from one to the other is consequently increased. The Eye, that can discern objects clearly, and accurately, is of much more value than that, which takes in a number at a rapid glance, without any distinct discernment of their various distances, and proportions. Just so it is with the Mind; which, if destitute of the capability of *Discrimination*, will reap no advantage from the number of imperfect ideas, with which it is stored."

Under the fullest conviction of the justness and importance of these observations, and without any particular regard to the Arts of Elegance, Decoration, or Oratory—for the sole purpose of conveying instruction of the highest concern—are these hints arranged: and, what has now been stated will, I flatter myself, be considered as a sufficient apology for any detail of illustration, which may be expedient in establishing my present *Assertion* *. For

* I should not have introduced this remark, were I not fully aware of the fastidious squeamishness of the Times, in the article of Style; and, that I may be censured for the *decies repetita*. But, as it has been observed on a very different occasion, "where there is so strong a Propensity to Error, Delusion, and Falshood, extraordinary efforts are requisite to bring people back to Scripture, and to Truth. Endless repetitions are necessary to a child, before it can remember the alphabet: but, the Child is much more easily taught than such persons: for, he has no Self-satisfaction, no Conceit, no false Prejudices, to conquer.

We need not be told, that the *nuda Veritas* is not the object of general admiration. So much the worse. "I confess indeed, and in discourses, where we seek pleasure, and delight, rather than information and improvement, such ornaments, as we borrow from figurative

which end, I propose the following Enquiry—

SECTION X.

What is that peculiar Work of God, which passes upon those, who are in a state of Salvation, as the Recipients, or Subjects, of divine Grace ?*

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language, can scarce pass for faults. But, if we would speak of things, as they are, we must allow, that all the art of Rhetoric, besides *Order* and *Clearness*—all the artificial application of Eloquence—is only calculated to move the passions, and mislead the judgment."

* There are not many religious topics, against which the tide of *Prejudice* is apt to rise higher than against the interpretation we shall now give of this Ποιημα, this "Workmanship"—or, this Κτισις εν Χριστω Ιησε, this "*Creation in Christ Jesus.*" Should the Reader discover the symptoms of it in his breast, at this moment, let me intreat him to exercise one of the noblest feats of Magnanimity he will ever perform: let him, for once, lay aside all his prepossessions, and permit the Question a fair hearing. Let him say to himself, very coolly, What is *Prejudice?* It is a rash Judgment, or an hasty opinion, we have prematurely formed of any person, or thing—without sufficient examination. It is therefore irrational, unmanly, unjust.—What are the *Springs*, and *Causes* of it? Ignorance, Vanity, Self-conceit, Pride, human Authority, corrupt Affections, and bad Tempers.—How is it to be *cured?* By encouraging an honest Ingenuousness of

As I would not willingly be charged with being deficient in the exercise of that Charity, or Candour, which seems to be more frequently recommended in the world, and more highly celebrated, than divine Truth, or christian Grace, I will presume, that you are in the constant habit of searching the Scriptures—and that, THE BIBLE is not the only book, you do *not* read. In that case, you must, I ap-

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Mind—an unbiassed Enquiry—diligent Research—a Love of truth—and, above all, moral Integrity.

Avaunt then, all *Prejudice!* and let my Mind be generously expanded to the admission of sacred Verity, in its whole round of rays: let me receive it with cordial simplicity, as the most precious Jewel, and Ornament, I can possess—the divine Grace alone excepted.

" It is the close, frequent, and feeling Inspection of these *Interiora* of man's sublime condition, as Immortal, Redeemed, and Regenerate, that is the highest cordial of human joy, and the richest mine of human thought. A Mine, deep-dug by few! And yet, without it, man is not more a stranger to the natives of Saturn, than to Himself. Without it, he must want the true, genuine, vital, spirit of a Christian. None, without it, can be filled with the light and comfort of the holy Ghost."

YOUNG.

prehend, have noticed, that the inspired Penmen occasionally speak of a certain "*good work*," which has been begun by a supernatural Agency in all those, who are "called to be Saints:" as when it is said, "He, which hath begun *a good work* in them, will perform it, unto the day of Jesus Christ; and that, it is God, which *worketh in them* to *will*, and to *do*, of his good pleasure. Philip. i. 6. . ii. 13."

We cannot be too inquisitive about the *Nature* of this Work; especially when it is understood, that the more intimately we are acquainted with its nature, whether in speculation, or by personal experience*—which is infinitely better—the

* Having suffered much inconvenience myself from the power of *Prejudice*, I have determined to assail it in every quarter; and I have seen it rise with great disgust, in minds of superior Intelligence, whenever this term is made use of in this application. It has been said a thousand times, "But, what do you mean by *Experience*, in matters of Religion?"—We mean by it, those impressions and effects, which the Truths of Christianity produce within the Heart, under the secret Influence of

more we shall discover its *Goodness.* Can there then be either a more rational, or a more powerful Motive, to induce us to investigate this subject?

There may be those among us, whose Ignorance and Prejudice—two very blind Guides, it must be confessed—may mislead them to imagine, that I am soaring

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divine Grace. Prejudice, indeed, will place all such *spiritual Sensations* to the account of Enthusiasm, or Fanaticism. But, "had we only the book of Psalms, we might trace all the *affections*, and *passions*, *desires*, and *aversions*, *joys*, and *sorrows*, *hopes*, and *fears*, *anger*, and *shame*, with all their various objects, and keen emotions, which Christians are said to feel." What indeed will the Enemies to all religious Feelings make of Rom. xv. 13? Can a man be filled with *Peace*, and *Hope*, without any personal Experience, or Consciousness, of it? Nothing, I trow, can be more visionary, or dreaming, than such a philosophy, as that!

Some of our most learned Interpreters of the sacred pages, who pass through the letter, and imbibe their spirit, are of opinion, that the passages, to which I shall now refer, must relate principally to a Religion, which rests not in speculation or systems, but which goes directly to the sensibilities of the Heart. Hos. iv. 14——23. . . . . xiv. 1——9. Zeph. iii. 12——17. cum multis aliis.

into the regions of Mystery, when I assure them, that, this Work, so essentially necessary to our Salvation, and indeed a most material branch of it, is *a new Creation*; sometimes called, " a being born *again*," or, " born of God from *above*, *ανωθεν*;" and which is always accompanied with the commmunication of " the life of God," or spiritual Life, to the human Soul: which, as we have already proved, is, *by nature*, " dead in trespasses and sins *."

* It should be noted, as we go along, that this new, moral, or spiritual Creation perfectly answers to that moral or spiritual Death, which has been already stated; as it lies in a loss of the Image of God, or, a privation of original Rectitude—in Impotence to that, which is intrinsically good—and in the prevailing Bias of the mind, which is only evil. This is so much a fundamental Verity of the christian Revelation, that, could it be disproved, the whole system is effectually subverted. As a Deist, I would ask no more, to compel me to renounce it. If, when we assert this total defection from original rectitude—an innate propensity to evil—and an entire impotency to that which is pronounced good in the estimate of Heaven, it can be made appear, that we are advancing so many *Falshoods*—in our humble opinion, the whole system of Christianity is completely overthrown: nor can the most inveterate Infidel desire more.

That such language may sound rather mysterious, according to the usual accep-

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The national Church has very properly introduced the doctrine of *original Sin and Corruption* into her Articles; and it is indisputably of the first importance that we admit it into our Creed.

"This Doctrine," says a learned Professor of Divinity in one of our famous Universities, "has been considered by some, as a Theory of little *Utility*. But, who shall call a Doctrine useless, which the SCRIPTURE has published? Can that be deemed *useless*, which lets us into the right knowledge of our own Selves? Can that be called *useless*, which makes us set an high value on our REDEMPTION by Jesus Christ? Is this the language of Reason, or of Learning? If it be, "Fie upon it—fie upon it!"

It has been objected again to the same doctrine, that it *disgusts* men of *philosophic* minds, and makes them averse to Revelation.—So does the Doctrine of the Trinity; and of the Incarnation; and of divine Influence; and indeed all the *Peculiarities* of the Religion of Grace: but, shall the Ark of God be sacrificed to the philosophical Dagon? The Fault is in the Minds of those, who are disgusted; and, where fundamentals, or first Principles, are at stake, it may be thought *candid* and *liberal*, according to the modern phraseology, but upon the Christian System, it is impious, to make any compromise. We are indeed expressly forbidden to gratify the pride of human Science; which has too often hindered many from treating the *Doctrines* of Revelation with sufficient respect.

tation of the term, is admitted; and though it may be rejected by those, who, in too many instances, very impiously affect what they deem a more rational and philosophical style, "we speak *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery:*" for, this is one of the titles, by which his sacred Oracles are discriminated: and, that they address us in this strain, is almost too obvious to be argued—had not the obstinate perverseness of mankind rendered it expedient.

Did not the great Prophet of our God urge *this Work*, in a most impressive manner, upon "a Master in Israel?" whose Profession indeed it was, to in-

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The great Locke himself was seduced by it, to be both afraid and ashamed of them. Amidst all his critical Studies, he seems most strangely to have passed over these two remarkable passages, Matt. xviii. 1——3. . . Mark x. 15.

How astonishing must have been the wilful blindness of a Philosopher, who misrepresented the epistle to the Ephesians, as a Composition of *Sublimity*, and *Eloquence*, rather than of sacred Truth!! I marvel not, that it should be said in another place, Col. ii. 8, 9.

struct others, but, who needed that instruction himself, which was of the highest moment to his true excellence, and happiness. Did he not repeatedly and most solemnly attest to this "Ruler of the Jews"—as to ecclesiastical or religious concerns—the absolute Necessity of his "being born of the Spirit," in order to his admission into the kingdom of God? and, did he not assert, that it was an *internal*, a *spiritual*, a *secret*, or a *mysterious*, and *supernatural* Work? Be not so disingenuous, and false to Truth, as to shut your eyes against the Light, which blazes upon them; but, advert to the passage itself, and disdain those infamous arts of subtilty, which would labour to corrupt its pure and genuine import. John iii. 1——8 *.

* A little, low, earthly Mind may perhaps toil ingeniously to fritter away the sublime meaning of all this into something external, and ceremonial: but, how much more likely is he, to enter into the true spirit of this memorable Conference, who says, "When a man is born again, or created anew in Christ Jesus, the ruins of his Nature are repaired, and every noble and divine Grace is implanted in his heart. His Understanding has suitable

Having no purpose to serve, but that, which I conceive to be the christian Verity, I would earnestly intreat you to divest yourselves of all prepossession, and sophistry, and to compare those few verses with what an Apostle has advanced—where, after having congratulated the Elect of God, upon that never-fading in-

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views of the most interesting subjects; and his Temper and Behaviour are rightly formed towards God, and Man. What a glorious and surprizing Change is this! Should you see a clod of earth rising from under your feet, and brightening into a Sun, it would not be so beautiful a Transformation. For, it gives a Man the very temper of Heaven, and prepares him for the enjoyments, and business, of that sacred Region."—Does not the common Sense of every unprejudiced Person induce him to think, that nothing short of this could be intended by our great Prophet in this place? Nothing short of this was worthy the seriousness, the repetition, the ardour, with which this matter was urged on the attention of Nicodemus. Let me solicit the Reader, if he is at all dubious, or hesitating, not to pass over this interesting point with a careless levity, or to reject it with a prejudiced disgust. The less he suffers any learned criticism to interfere, the better: the case is simple, and adapted to every common capacity, as it stands in the evangelical record.

heritance, for the lively hope of which they were indebted to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he charges them to "love one another, with a pure heart fervently, being born again." 1 Pet. i. 23 ——25.

To be thus regenerated, is exactly the same thing, as St. Paul intends by being "*created anew* in Christ Jesus after the Image of God, in Righteousness, and true Holiness*:" without which new Creation, there can be no spiritual life in the Soul; and, of course, no spiritual acts of Piety,

* Is not this the Ομοιωσις τω Θεω, of which Plato had formed some faint and general idea, when he describes his excellent Character, by one, who endeavours Δικαιος γινεσθαι, και επιτηδευων αρετην, εις οσον δυνατον ανθρωπω ομοιωσθας Θεω, "to make himself righteous, by labouring after Virtue, that he may be as like God, as it is possible for a Man to be?" It was for an *inspired* Philosopher to tell us, what the Grecian knew not—wherein this Likeness, or Image of God, consisted, and how it was to be attained. The Metamorphosis, in that case, is so great, that, "the Soul is in no respect what it was wont to be, as to the concerns of Religion. It has new views, new sensations, new joys, new sorrows, new tendencies, new aversions, new hopes, and new fears. In short, as an Apostle assures us, "All things are become new."

Devotion, or Goodness, can possibly be performed—let external appearances be ever so specious, and plausible. The most splendid shew of Religion, and Virtue, without this, is nothing more than the shadow without the substance*.

* The very terms, "creating, quickening, and raising the dead," denote both a divine Agency, and an instantaneous Communication, in regard to this spiritual Life: which must be considered as "the Source and Spring of every act of *christian* Piety and Virtue: consequently, this heavenly Principle of all evangelical excellence must be implanted *previously* to the exercise of such acts; just as Reason itself must precede all the acts of Reason. There must be a vital Principle of holiness, in order to a Course, or Series, of holy actions. And hence, we may see the vanity of that Religion, which is gained in the same manner, as a person learns a trade, or an uncultivated Mind becomes learned; namely, by the exertion of merely natural Powers, and in the use of suitable means." This, if you please, may be called, "The Religion of Nature," in contradistinction to *The Religion of Grace*. In the former, it may be said, *Hic, Deus nihil agit*; of the latter, that, the Grace of Christ is "all in all." Reason and Philosophy contend for the one—Christianity, for the other. *Utrum horum mavis, accipe.* We read of some, who "desire to make a fair Shew in the flesh," Θελουσιν ευπροσωπησαι εν σαρκι; but, is it not much better to be able to say, Gal. ii. 20?

This spiritual Life, or new Creation, is always followed with spiritual light in the Intellect—or, the illumination of the Understanding: so that the MIND, the discerning Faculty, has a new perception of divine things—of their truth, worth, and beauty; which is of so peculiar a nature, as to be called, "The Light of Life*:"

* The Oracles of Grace and Truth have distinguished it by the epithet of "*marvellous* light:" from its divine Original, "the Father of lights;" from the mysterious Way, in which it is conveyed into the heart; and from the wonderful things it discovers to us. It is as one says, "the Disperser of our spiritual darkness—the Remover of our fears—the Reviver of our hopes—and our Deliverer from the shadow of death. It is the Messenger of all good; the Unfolder of deep secrets; the Revealer of unseen excellencies; the Fountain of all joy; the Day-break of eternity, and the Dawn of ineffable glory."—— Let no one imagine that this is declamatory rant: it is the sober testimony of holy Writ.

He must be blind indeed, who has not discovered, that all the Scriptures represent mankind by nature in a State of spiritual darkness, or ignorance: in other words, as destitute of spiritual Sight: for, sensible as they are to all the charms of the visible Creation, they perceive not the more attractive and infinitely superior loveliness, beauty, and value of divine things: their mental powers are not at all captivated by the glories of the Godhead, or of the

which, upon scriptural examination, will be found to be something vastly superior to all the light of Reason, Learning, or Philosophy; as much as the Spirit of hea-

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Redeemer—of his Law, or of his Gospel. The very Angels desire to pry into the things, which they turn away from with cold indifference! They say unto God himself, "Depart from us—we desire not the knowledge of thy ways!" What Blindness is this!

What then is divine Illumination? Is it not, to have the eyes of the Understanding enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom to a discovery or perception of those spiritual beauties and glories, which are proposed to our *contemplation*, and *delight*, in the sacred Volume? If, according to the best principles of human Philosophy, it be granted, that the idea of natural Beauty presupposes an internal Sense, by which the Mind is capacitated to discover that kind of Beauty, we contend, that, in order to discover the spiritual beauty and transcendent excellence of divine things, there must be a spiritual Sense implanted in the Soul in the work of the new Creation. Nor can the most penetrating Genius, accompanied with the richest stores of Learning, supply the want of it. It is another *kind* of thing. Have you ever considered 1 Cor. i. 17——31. . . 1 John, ii. 20. . . v. 20?

"Te quæsumus, exaudi nos, Domine—ut Episcopos, Presbyteros, et Diaconos, verâ cognitione et recto intellectu Verbi tui *illuminare* digneris; et ut tam *Doctrinâ*, quam moribus, illud pro viribus patefaciant ac promoveant!"

venly wisdom is superior to the Spirit of human science. For, while the latter serves only to gratify the pride and vanity of Man, the uniform effect of the former, is, to generate humility, and self-abasement; a Disposition, strange as it may be thought, the most estimable in the judgment of God; and, to possess which, is, " to be renewed in the spirit of our Mind"—according to the obsolete phraseology of Inspiration.

It will not however be a sufficient evidence, that the Mind is renewed, unless the HEART be changed. They are indeed inseparably connected with the spiritual Creation, of which we treat—according to the principles of divine Philosophy: and, it can, I think, be no matter of theological controversy, that the whole Scriptures have laid the greatest stress upon the state of the *Heart*, as the primary seat of true Religion; and that all the heirs of Salvation are eminently exalted above those, " who know not God, and obey not the

Gospel," not so much by their outward profession, or their extensive knowledge, of sacred things, as by the actual reception of that "*new Heart*," and that "*right Spirit*," which He has so expressly promised them in his own Word. What indeed can be more idle, or ignorant, than for any person to suppose himself a partaker of true Religion, if it be not implanted in his *Heart*—when he is assured, that, it is the prerogative of the most High, to "search the Heart!"

But, let us hear the language of his own Revelation on this point. Can any thing be more luminous, or satisfactory, than when it is said, Matt. xii. 33——35. Rom. ii. 28, 29?

More than one half of the insincerity and hypocrisy of those, who chuse to deceive themselves, may be very confidently attributed to their *wilful* inattention to passages so perfectly intelligible, and explicit, as these. "Is THINE HEART

RIGHT?" That, is the grand Question.* But, let there be no reply, till it has been brought to the only infallible Test, "He that trusteth in his own heart," for an answer, "is a Fool:" but, he, who suffers it to be tried by the judgment of unerring Truth, is eternally wise.

To this end indeed there must be a Renovation of the WILL: which has gene-

* In our various intercourse with social life, we have frequently heard Characters, at a most melancholy distance from true Religion, and christian Virtue, speak with as much complacency of *the Goodness of their hearts*, as if it were not one of the most difficult and exalted attainments, to which Humanity can aspire. We know, in such cases, that they must have weighed themselves in the false Balance of *Self deceit*. We have been led to think, that, the Man, who has the best heart, will be the last person in the world to say much in its favour. We look upon sound Self-knowledge, and deep Humility, to belong to the class of *Inseparables*. Nostra officia, etiam optima et præstantissima, nullam ex ipsis efficaciam habent conferendi nobis ullum bonum: omnis efficacia ex Dei in Christo benedictione pendet. Quid denique ad pacem conscientiæ, et lætitiam in Christo, nostra valent opera? quæ, si ad eorum imperfectionem et qua fædantur labem attendamus, non nisi bellum clamant: solus Christi sanguis clamat pacem, quam frustrà alibi quæras. Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. . . . cxliii. 2.

rally been considered as the predominating or supreme faculty of the human soul. Very requisite therefore it is, that this should take a proper direction—that the Choice, we exercise, in any concern, which relates to our chief Good, may be regulated by the utmost deliberation, and care: because, an error, here, must have a most dangerous, if not fatal tendency.

For this weighty reason, the inspired Writings address us frequently upon the conversion, or, the new creation, of *the Will*—that it may move in that Line, which shall terminate eventually in everlasting peace. Of its own nature, and left to itself, we are apprized, it is wholly corrupt; and, that there is nothing we ought to dread more than its free determinations, while uninfluenced by divine Grace; which alone can powerfully, and effectually, though secretly, incline it, to walk in the paths of universal rectitude, instead of those numerous ways, which, while they

seem so inviting, and enchanting, only serve to fascinate the unwary into destruction *.

* If its numerous Advocates mean any thing by the *Self-determination*, for which they contend, it must be, I presume, that we have an inherent and independent capacity to determine our own Minds, and Hearts, to the election of good, or evil. No such Error can possibly coalesce with the clearest and fullest dictates of heavenly Wisdom. To say nothing of its diametrical opposition to the whole tenor of Christianity, and without aiming at any philosophical discussion of the subject, it is, *prima facie*, a total rejection of the indispensably requisite influences of the holy Ghost.

How far the construction of my intellectual Faculties and moral Powers may differ from the rest of mankind, I know not: but, after the most diligent and persevering Introspection—with all the concomitant advantages of Solitude, and Silence, to consult the real operations of these Faculties, and Powers—I am perfectly convinced, that I have no such innate and self-determining Sufficiency. Nothing like it. I feel, to this moment, an entire correspondency between myself and the humiliating Character, so circumstantially delineated in Rom. vii. 9——25. Let those, who have advanced to a higher State, throw their stones at those beneath them. I envy them not *such* gratification: it is, no doubt, a *lovely* imitation of the Example of Christ! One thing, however, I will affirm, as in the immediate presence of the Omniscient, that, were I possessed of any *self-determining* Agency to good, not an Angel before his Throne should be more humble, or holy, or heavenly, than the Scribbler of these pages. But, were I to maintain it, how should I dispose of the subse-

In the history of human life, nothing is of greater importance to the happiness of man than the government of his PASSIONS, and AFFECTIONS. Should they unfortunately receive their impulse from Pride, Avarice, or Sensuality, Reason * must be

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quent Scriptures? The old Serpent, who seduced our first Parents, might perhaps inform me. Possibly, he might be able to pervert the following passages to sanction the self-determining Agency of Man; Prov. xvi. 1, 9, 33. . xix. 21. . xx. 24. . xxi. 1, 4. . xxviii. 26. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. Is. xxvi. 12. . x. 12, 13——15. . xl. 28 —— 31. . xlv. 22—25. . xlviii. 17. Jer. x. 23. . xiii. 23. Hag. i. 13, 14. Zech. iv. 6, 7. John xv. 5. . . ii. Cor. iii. 5. Phil. i. 6. . ii. 13. 2 Cor. v. 5, 18.—Now, take thy pen, and with rash and impious hand erase this selection from the Oracles of Heaven; and listen to the less abasing dictates of Reason, Philosophy, and Satan, who will agree to flatter your pride, and assure you with one voice, that, "Ye shall be as *Gods!*"

* Reason, as one calls it, Εικων Θεε; and another, Της ψυχης ανωτατον μερος, "the supreme part of the Soul; and a third, Summus in anima gradus, the first Quality in the Soul." If so, and that be disordered, where, and what, is the Man? He is, what a great Writer has most admirably denominated, "A Centaur not fabulous."—"He is an Immortal, without the sense of immortality. He is a Rational, dethroning reason; and an Animal, transgressing appetite: an unhappy combination, a wretched chaos of all, without the benefit of either: nay,

sacrificed on the Altar of these base propensities, and both Religion and Virtue must lie bleeding at their feet. And, how often do we see all the moral Dignity of our nature dethroned, degraded, and in the dust, while those odious Vices are permitted to assume its rightful seat, and empire.

The only efficacious remedy for an evil so perilous, and yet so common, is, that spiritual Creation, which never fails to give a new Turn, or, what I shall venture to call, a new TASTE, to every various *Passion*, and *Affection*, of the soul. It is not my design to entertain you with a pious or a philosophical treatise on a subject, which enters so deeply into the vital parts of Christianity : I shall make no attempt to divide, or to define them, with any precision—but only to set before you, very briefly, their noblest and most valua-

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a sufferer from each, because abusing all. They are not as Heaven designed them, three parties in alliance for his Happiness; but, three conspirators, of his own making, against his Peace."

ble use*. If, notwithstanding, your degenerate ambition is, rather to sink, than

* We will present the uninformed Reader however with this little Key to the *primary* emotions of the human Soul, in their most sublime exercise.—What is *Love?* It is an Union of mind and heart arising from a similarity of judgment, taste, and pursuit. It is the concord, or harmony, of two Wills, to produce one and the same effect. Mark xii. 28——33.

What is *Hatred?* It is the vehement and unconquerable aversion of all the amiable passions to every thing, that is offensive to the divine Being—dishonourable to Christ, in his mediatorial Character—destructive to true Religion—and injurious to the supreme Happiness of man. It is founded on pious or scriptural principles—and is equally remote from superstition, enthusiasm, bigotry, and philosophism.

What is *Hope?* It is the lively, animating expectation of some future Good; after the possession and enjoyment of which the desires of the heart are earnestly excited. Rom. viii. 24, 25.

What is *Fear?* It is that pious sensibility of the Soul, which flows from a love of real excellence, and which renders us delicately apprehensive of forfeiting the favour, or incurring the displeasure, of the highest Object of our affections.

What is *Joy?* It is the exultation of the Spirits, arising from the possession, or from the strong anticipation, and foretaste, of some satisfying Good. Ps. xxxvi. 7——9.

What is *Sorrow?* It is that tender, deep, and in some instances, almost over-whelming despondency, which accompanies an impressive and penitential sense of the evil,

to soar, you renounce the character of the Man, for that of the Brute, and may most deservedly be classed with your Fellow-commoners of the field.

Solicitous, as I feel, to preserve among my species, their most elevating distinctions in the scale of Being, and of Excellence, I would recommend it to you, with a fervour, which no eloquence can express, had I the united energies of Demosthenes, and Cicero, to cultivate the *religious Affections*: not indeed to eradicate those of an inferior or secondary class, and which attach to all the constituted relations, and amiable charities, of domestic and social existence—nothing like it; but, to assign them their lawful place

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guilt, and danger of Sin, in any of its operations: or, the want of divine Consolation.

It would be easy to shew, that the general result of this *piety* of the passions and affections of the Soul must be, *Christian Happiness*: to which, even the sorrows of the heart, when their Source is heavenly, are no obstacles; but rather, an ingredient. 2 Cor. vii. 10. Luke vii. 44——48. . . xv. 10.

of due subjection to those of an infinitely higher order, and utility. And, in this demand, I am supported by the doctrine of just proportion; which is, in fact, no other than that of *right Reason*. Let that, which is of the highest order, value, and utility, have the *first* place in our attention, regard, and esteem *."

One of the passions of the human soul, and indeed, virtually, all the rest, is Love†; for, upon an intellectual Analysis of Man, it will be found, that they all follow that

* The remarkable declarations of the divine Author of our Religion must have proceeded upon this principle, when he said, Matt. x. 37——39.

† This is incontrovertibly the *Master-passion* of the heart; whatever the object may be—visible, or invisible. For, upon the most accurate and philosophical Scrutiny, it will be evident, that we hope, and fear, we desire, and we disgust, we rejoice, and we grieve, *as we love*. This is, in fact, the το ηγεμονικὸν και κυριευον της ψυχης μερος. It is practically, and, in effect, both the centripetal and centrifugal Force, in all the mental revolutions. We follow, or we fly, according to that Impetus. It is, therefore, of *infinite* moment, what direction our Love happens to take.

guide, and take that clue: because, this is the strongest emotion, by which the heart is actuated. It is, in truth, the Main-spring, by which the whole interior is conducted. What then, whether the appeal be made to impartial Reason, or to the christian Religion, ought to be the grand, the principal object of our Love? Most unquestionably That, which the Scriptures have every where prescribed. It is just, it is right, it is good, that they should require us "to love the Lord our God, with all our Heart, and Mind, and Soul, and Strength; and our Neighbour, as Ourselves." They cannot depart from this injunction. This is Reason, Justice, and Rectitude *.

* Is it not, because the christian virtues are subordinate to this, and receive the impulse of this passion, that *Love* is uniformly pointed out to us as the brightest of the heavenly train, and the *first* and *great* commandment of the Law? The impartial Reader, who has not yet surrendered up his Bible to the infidelity, dissipation, and indifferentism, of the Age, is earnestly requested to advert to Matt. xii. 28——34. . . . Gal. v. 6. . . . 1 John iv.

Next to Love, there is no passion more generally afloat than HOPE. It is the Anchor, by which the heart is upheld amidst all the diversified storms of this agitated and ever-fluctuating scene. Were it not for this Refuge, we should see every Eye suffused with tears—every Breast heaving with wretchedness—and even the stoutest Courage gradually declining into all the horrors of despair. Where then ought this consolatory passion to be supremely fixed? Do not all the countless miseries, to which we are exposed, of Mind, Body, and Estate—from within, and from without—in life, and in death—cry aloud to us, to cast anchor where we shall be *eternally* safe—in the bosom of everlasting Repose? Is not this the voice of Reason? And is it not the voice of God? Hebr. vi. 17——20.

To obey that Voice, is the most successful method we can possibly pursue, if we would experience that "JOY, which is unspeakable, and full of glory." And it

should be remembered, that, if we are indeed "the Workmanship of God," as it respects this spiritual creation, our Love, our Hope, and our Joy, will receive this *spiritual* impression; which will necessarily be transferred to every other passion, and affection. Our Admiration, our Desire, our Esteem, our Complacence, and our Gratitude will, in that case, be *supremely*, and *habitually*, under this influence: and our Dislike, our Aversion, our Fears, our Grief, and our Hatred, will operate accordingly *.

* Philosophers may study the physical Analysis of the passions; but, Christians should devote themselves to their moral Application. The former, accords well with the Wisdom of this World: the latter, is more congenial with That, which is from above. But, how seldom do we meet with Characters, who are exercising the several affections of *Love*, *Hope*, and *Joy*, according to the manner exemplified in Rom. v. 1——v, 11? Christianity, as it is stated in the Scriptures, and as it appears among its numerous disciples, does not *generally* bear so much similitude, as the substance and its shade; for they have little, or no resemblance at all: or, which may peradventure be the case, this Writer, after all his pains, must have mistaken its true nature. Search, and see.

Upon this ground, it is positively asserted, that, "If any Man be in Christ, he is *a new Creature*—or, there is a new Creation." Is it not so? The Character, I have been delineating, is among the greatest rarities of this world—"one of a thousand," as we proverbially say. And, this is a Rarity, of divine original, and production. For, whether our Souls be quickened—our Understandings enlightened—our Hearts changed—our Wills converted—or, our Affections spiritualized—it would be the very height of impiety, not to acknowledge, with adoring gratitude and celebration, that,

"ALL THINGS ARE OF GOD."

2 Cor. v. 18——21*.

* Non dissimulo, in eâ me esse sententia, initium novæ vitæ non ex prædicatione legis, sed Evangelii esse. Evangelium est semen regenerationis nostræ, ministerium et sermo reconciliationis, et lex spiritus vitæ quæ liberat a lege peccati ac mortis. Nimirùm dum Christus annunciatur, et vita in Christo, Spiritus Christi illabitur in electorum animas, inditque iis principium vitæ spiritualis. Gal. iii. 2. . . Jac. i. 18. Quo nos beneficio, ex immensâ GRATIÆ SUÆ opulentia, clementer mactet beatus ille Deus, qui solus habet immortalitatem: cui honor et robur in æternum!

Let the Reader be persuaded to dig deep in the rich Mine of this passage; the treasures of which may all be comprised in these analytical propositions—

1.

GOD himself has infinitely condescended to provide the Means of our restoration to his forfeited Favour, Friendship, and Love!

2.

JESUS CHRIST is the sole Medium of Reconciliation between God and Man.

3.

To those who are actually reconciled to God by the death of his Son, no trespasses will ever be imputed.

4.

The Gospel is to be received as "The Word of Reconciliation."

5.

The holy Scriptures are to be preached, principally as "The Ministry of reconciliation" to God—through the sacrifice and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

6.

Every Individual of the human Race stands in perishing need of this reconciliation.

7.

For the whole of this great Transaction—as to its plan, execution, and application—we are indebted to the sovereign Will, the infinite Wisdom, and the boundless Grace, of the divine Being: by whose almighty Power alone we are created anew in Christ Jesus.

" Strange tidings these, to tell a world, who treat
" All, but their own Experience, as deceit!
" Will they believe—though credulous enough
" To swallow much upon much weaker proof—
" That there are blest inhabitants of earth
" Partakers of *a new celestial Birth?*
" Their Hopes, Desires, and Purposes estranged
" From things terrestrial, and divinely changed?
" Their very language of a kind that speaks
" The Soul's sure int'rest in the Good she seeks?
" No!——
" And yet, God knows, look human Nature through
" [And, in due time, the World shall know it too,]
" That since the flow'rs of Eden felt the blast,
" That after man's defection laid all waste,
" Sincerity towards th' heart-searching God,
" Has made *the new born Creature* her abode;
" Nor shall be found in *unregen'rate* Souls,
" Till the last fire burn all between the poles."

THE SUPREME GOOD.

Omnibus in terris, quæ sunt à Gadibus usque
Auroram et Gangem, pauci dignoscere possunt
Vera bona, atque illis multùm diversa, remotâ
Erroris nebulâ. Quid enim Ratione timemus,
Aut cupimus? quid tam dextro pede concipis, ut te
Conatus non pæniteat, votique peracti.

JUVEN. SAT. 10.

Non enim refert ad Felicitatem ejus, quantum agrorum aret, a quàm multus salutetur, quàm pretioso luctu cubet: sed, *quàm bonus sit*. Bonus autem est, si sit in eo Ratio ad DEI voluntatem accommodata et perfecta, quæ Virtus vocatur.

" He is *The happy Man*, whose Life e'en now
" Shews somewhat of that happier life to come.
" Who, doom'd to an obscure but tranquil state,
" Is pleas'd with it—and, were he free to chuse,
" Would make his fate his choice. Whom peace, the fruit
" Of *Virtue*, and whom virtue, fruit of *Faith*,
" Prepare for *Happiness*; bespeak him one,
" Content indeed to sojourn, while he must,
" Below the skies—but, having *there* his home.
" The World o'erlooks him in her busy search
" Of objects more illustrious in her view;
" And occupied as earnestly as she,
" Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the world.
" She scorns his Pleasures; for, she knows them not:
" He seeks not her's; for, he has prov'd them vain.
" So glide my Life away!"

AMBITIOUS, as I do certainly feel, that the expectation of those, whose curiosity may induce them to peep into this Compendium, may not be wholly disappointed in any thing, that pertains to moral information, this, I believe, is the proper place, to insert a few hints on the *peculiar* Nature of *christian Happiness**.

* Will any one be so absurd, as to question, whether this is the Point to which all our Knowledge, and all our Studies, respecting the human Constitution, Excellence, and Perfection, should ultimately tend? Is it not our very Being's end, and aim? The philosophic, and the illiterate, pant equally for Happiness—though they may take very different directions to obtain it. It does not enter into our purpose, to prepare a regular and complete Essay on this subject—"by weighing the several Objects, which form the Materials of pleasure, and pain; by adjusting with any exactness their respective degrees of moment; by narrowly examining the Frame of Man, his Capacity, and Powers thence arising; or, the particular relations, he stands in, to these several Objects:" it may not be amiss, however, to state with some nicety the rational and gradational process of the Mind in this high attainment. For, in the acquisition of true Happiness, the following steps must be taken:

1. I must believe, that there is such a thing as *the supreme Good of Man.*

2. I must animadvert upon it; or turn my attention fixedly towards it.

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Happiness, we all admit, is the necessary Desideratum of every human Being. To thirst after it, even though he has not made any proper enquiry concerning it, is an Essential of his Constitution: it is interwoven in his frame. And, if the Religion, for which we plead, were not the most certain and sublime Source of right Reason, Virtue, Philosophy, and Bliss—were it even possible, to devise any other,

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3. I must perceive, clearly, what it is—and why it is so.

4. I must be conscious, that I do perceive it.

5. I must have a Taste, or Relish, for it, whatever it may be.

6. I must desire it.

7. I must seek for it—by making use of the proper Means to acquire it.

8. I must hope for it: for, that is the principal Motive and Encouragement, to excite my diligent perseverance in the pursuit.

9. If I can believe, that I am in the actual possession of it—and that Faith be *well-founded*—in proportion to the strength of that Faith, I am really happy. Hebr. xi. 1, 13, 24——26.

Let those, who wish to be happy, apply all the preceding particulars to *Religion* or *Salvation*; which, in the christian System, are convertible terms.

superior to it, and within our reach—I am one of those, who should scarcely think it worth contending for. But, I embrace Christianity, as the only sure and inexhaustible Fountain of Happiness.

Happiness, I conceive to be the *rational*, the *spiritual*, the *immortal*, Good of Man: nor can I cordially subscribe to any definition of it, short of this. My observation and experience will not suffer me to do it. To suppose, that it can consist in any thing, inferior to that, which can satisfy the most improved Reason, and the immaterial Spirit, with which we are formed—and which is commensurate with the whole of our destiny, in point of duration—is the extreme of folly; the Dream of a trifling, vain, or disordered imagination: disordered, either by its idle illusions, or, by its sensual depravities.

It will be granted me, I presume, that, no reflecting Mind can be *happy*, so long as it is liable to the punishment of those

offences, which have been committed by thought, word, or deed, against the divine Being: that, there can be no true Felicity, so long as we are the objects of his Displeasure: so long as we continue under the dominion of our corrupt Passions: so long as the heart is supremely attached to a World, which is every day fleeting like a shadow, from our view* : so long

* There is no end to the melancholy pictures of human Life, with which Men of Genius, Talent, Sensibility, and Reflection, are continually presenting us. Take a specimen, or two, from among many.

" How dark, how fleeting, are the days of man!
" What countless Sorrows crowd his narrow span!
" For, what is *Life?* A groan—a breath—a sigh—
" A bitter tear—a drop of Misery;
" A Lamp just dying in sepulchral gloom;
" A voice of anguish from the lonely tomb!
" Or wept, or weeping, all the change we know—
" 'Tis all our mournful history below.
" Pleasure, is grief but smiling to destroy:
" And what is sorrow, but the ghost of joy?
" Oh haste that hour, whose rustling wings shall play,
" To warn the shades of guilt, and grief away!"

" Take then, O World, thy much-indebted Tear;
" How sad a sight is *human Happiness*,

as we are destitute of a well-founded Hope of future and never-fading Joys: so long as an approaching and inevitable Dissolution is accompanied with all its natural terrors: so long as the prospect of a boundless Eternity, from which there is no possible escape, is apprehended with dismay. Survey each of these particulars, and examine calmly, whether they can possibly coalesce with any idea we ought to entertain of *true Happiness* *.

" To those, whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!—
" Not Happiness itself makes good her name:
" Our very wishes give us not our wish!
" How distant oft the thing we doat on most,
" From that, for which we doat, *Felicity!*
" The smoothest course of Nature has its pains.
" But, endless is the list of human Ills;
" And sighs would sooner cease than Cause to sigh."

* To Persons, who are accustomed to " walk in the light" of divine Knowledge, it is extremely painful to hear the dark and benighted manner, in which the great mass of Society are perpetually talking of *Religion*, and *Happiness*. It is indeed a Babel of confusion. For, in very few words, What is Religion? It is the Pursuit of *Happiness*, by the practice of *right Reason*, or *sacred Truth*.

That they are all of them sad, and justifiable occasions of fearfulness, and woe,

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And what is Happiness? The simplest, and, at the same time, fullest definition, I have been able to form of it in my own Mind, is this. Happiness, is the Enjoyment of the supreme Good; *by Faith*—in a State of Grace, and Salvation; *by Sight*—in a future State of Perfection, and Glory.

Peradventure this may not be thought *Philosophy*; but, I am very certain, it is *Scripture:* which, in my judgment, is a much wiser, and a much better thing. And yet, it is not very unlike the style, in which Philosophers affect to speak;—we very nearly assume their own language, when we say, that, "A careful observance of sacred Truth, the practice of right Reason, and the way to Happiness, are, in the issue, the same thing." And, if we make the Bible the Κριτηριον, the Test, "*Truth*, *Reason*, and *Happiness*, which constitute *the christian Salvation*, are all in the same Interest, and conspire to advance and perfect human Nature." They are the only Panacæa, which Heaven has provided for the multiplied evils of our present existence. Had the ingenious and distinguished Author of "the Religion of Nature delineated" been suitably impressed with this Consideration, would he have poured forth his bitter lamentations on the various and incalculable *Miseries of Man*, without pointing out to us *their only Remedy?* We know that our "Paradise is lost;" and we wish to hear, how it is to be "regained:" we feel our wretchedness; and we sigh for Peace. They are Angels of benevolence, who point out to us the way to the latter. Luke ii. 13, 14.

will readily be acknowledged, by those, who have not taken refuge in the very dregs of modern Scepticism, and gross Infidelity. How then are they to be effectually removed? Under circumstances so melancholy, and of such complicated distress, CHRISTIANITY, like a celestial Messenger, steps in to our relief, with all her various consolations. She it is, that holds out to us a sovereign Balm for every wound, a perfect Remedy for every evil. She it is, that proposes to us the Happiness, of divine Pardon, and Favour: the happiness, of a Hope, which is "full of Immortality:" the happiness, of a Peace, which surpasseth all understanding: the happiness, of a Purity, which constitutes the only intrinsic worth, and indelible excellence, of the Soul: the happiness, of a moral Deliverance from all the seductive snares of this present World: the happiness, of a serene Freedom from all the agitating and tormenting dread of death*: and, to crown all, the happiness,

* There is nothing really amiable, or interesting, in the stubborn Insensibility of an Apathist, or a Stoic, in

of an Inheritance, which is incorruptible—of a Crown, whose glory is unfading—and of a Kingdom, which hath foundations eternal in the heavens.

Collect all these ideas together in your meditative moments, and then determine, whether it be possible to delineate a more complete sketch of substantial Felicity. If indeed they should prove, eventually, nothing more than the pleasures of Imagination*, can any other system of plea-

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the prospect of his dissolution; but, observe the grandeur of circumstances, which accompany, and occasion, the Christian's triumph over Death—as they are beautifully described by the Pen of inspiration, in 1 Cor. xv. 51——57. If any thing can more than fortify Humanity against all the alarms of our final exit, it is that view of things, which is there presented to us in strains no less sublime, than animating, and impressive.

* What a strange and perverse Taste it is, in the majority of mankind—that, chusing, as they generally do, to be carried away by the most illusive Imaginations, they should prefer those of a meaner kind, to those of the highest Order! Should the *pleasures* of heavenly Wisdom terminate, at last, in Vanity, and Emptiness, they are

sure exceed them? You admire Reason. To her I appeal.

Such is the peculiar nature and genius of that Happiness, which the christian Revelation has provided, and recommends. But, I will attempt to exhibit the same thing, in another Mode. I shall be excused—as this, of Happiness, is the grand central Point, in which all mankind are supposed to meet. This is the universal Aim; though too many mistake the Shadow for the Substance.

" Man, it is agreed, has a Soul of vast desires, and noble capacity: which no earthly pursuit, possession, or enjoyment,

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still more noble, and, while they continue, more gratifying, than those, which can be derived from any other Source.

" Such various Bliss the well-tun'd Heart enjoys,
" So sweet he feels its influence to attract
" The fixed Soul, to brighten the dull glooms
" Of care, and make the destin'd road of Life
" Delightful to his feet."

either can, or was ever intended to, *satisfy.*" Not the whole Inventory of this world can administer to it that chief Good, after which, it is formed, by its great Original, to aspire—so far, at least, as that nothing, which bears a sublunary stamp, can fill that aching Void, of which it must otherwise be sensible; unless indeed it has plunged all its natural dignity into the beastliness of the Centaur, or the more shocking brutality of atheistical Philosophism*.

* " We may therefore congratulate the *mere* Brute on his high prerogative, of being incapable of becoming such *a Monster of rationality*, as this: and the mere Man of Pleasure, will, for the future, if either just, or modest, give the wall to his Horse. For, mark this immortal maze of human ruin: of what nature, species, or rank in the creation does he conceive himself to be? Does this unconstrued, undecyphered creature consider himself as an *immortal* Being—or, only as a *rational*—or, as a mere *animal?* If as an Immortal, let him regard things eternal; if as a Rational, let reason reign; if as nothing more than an Animal, let him indulge appetite; let him not go beyond it. Unbounded appetite with stupifying sensualities bribes Reason to drop her dominion. Her dominion dropped renders blind Immortality regardless of eternal things; and they being disregarded, all Immortality's

" There is an ardent thirst in every human Soul after this *satisfying Good*, what-

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boundless powers and desires devolve on things temporal; and devolved on them, with violence impel deposed Reason, and riotous Appetite, to monstrous lengths of extravagance, which had otherwise lain quite beyond both their power and desire."——

Such are our obligations to these false and sensual ideas of *Pleasure*; especially when strengthened by that spirit of Infidelity, which too generally accompanies them: " by darkening our Understanding, they rob us of *this* world—and, by stupifying our Consciences, of the *next*."

" Patron of Pleasure! Doter on delight!
" I am thy rival; Pleasure I profess:
" 'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to Heav'n.
" How cold our thanks for bounties *unenjoy'd!*
" The love of Pleasure is man's eldest-born—
" Born in his cradle, living to his tomb.
" Wisdom, her younger sister, though more grave,
" Was meant to minister, and not to mar,
" Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts.
" Pleasure's the purpose of this serious page.
" Pleasure is but Religion's gayer name:
" I wrong her still—I rate her worth too low;
" Pleasure the flower, Religion is the root.
" Canst thou plead Pleasure's cause, as well as I?
" Know'st thou her *nature, purpose, parentage?*
" Not to turn human, brutal—but, to build
" Divine on human, Pleasure came from Heav'n.

ever it may be." If there be any innate principle of operation in the untaught Mind, it is this—that, it must be ever sighing after a Something, in which all its various faculties, and passions, can *rest*, and be *perfectly content*. To suppose, that the most refined Pleasures of sense are adequate to such a purpose, is a degradation of the Species far beneath that decency of Pride, which, in this instance, might be deemed almost a virtue.

" The Happiness of Man is, not the happiness of the Mortal, but, of *the Immortal*." Nothing but the childishness of idiocy can apologize for placing it in gorgeous Apparel, sounding Titles, sumptuous Buildings, honourable Preferments,

" It serves *ourselves*, our *species*, and our GOD;
" And to serve more, is past the sphere of Man.
" Glide then, for ever, Pleasure's *sacred stream!*
" Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
" And fosters ev'ry growth of happy life.
" Drink deep: the deeper, then, the more divine;
" Angels are angels from Indulgence there:
" 'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes *their* bliss."

popular Applause, inordinate Recreations, or any extent of earthly Treasures: all which must perish with our breath, and terminate in *Vanity* and *Dust*. Wilt thou fix thine eyes, or thine heart, upon the shadow of a shade? If the Conqueror of the World sat down, and wept, who will now dream of Felicity from the highest gratifications of Ambition, Wealth, or Sense *?

* The Reader may be well repaid for studying the book of "Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher," entirely in this view; passing over all the apparent difficulties, which may impede his progress, and attending only to the principal Design of the inspired Author: which is, to teach us how to make *a just Estimate of human Life*. It may be of use to compare it, with Dr. Young's admirable Essay on the same subject. Some *learned* Critics have found great fault with the former of these compositions! So Infidels, with the whole christian Revelation!!. So Lucretius, with all the arguments for the being of a God; because, *he* had discovered so many faults in that world, which has been ascribed to his creating Power!!! Nay—we have heard of one, whose Presumption and Impiety were so enormous, as to suppose, that he could have improved it! But alas! who can prescribe any limits to the depravity of the human Mind, when left to the madness and blasphemy of its own unrestrained operations! Sic ego—nisi Dei gratia præveniat.

" Neither the Quantity, nor the Variety, nor the Duration, of *any* created Objects can, in the nature of things, satisfy the Capacity, with which the Soul is endued—but, GOD ALONE: and, it is the characteristic Distinction of those, who are " *the Workmanship*" of God, to center there." The Happiness to be derived from thence has been circumstantially exhibited, in brief.

Now then—we boast of our Reason: but, upon what ground, if we do not apply it to its *best Use?* And, what is its best use—but, to lead us to make the *best Choice*—to pursue the *greatest* of all possible *Good*—to the comparative neglect of

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Certain it is—and I think it a duty I owe to society, to state to them, by way of correcting their superstitious admiration of " Science, falsely so called"—that, learned Men, and biblical Critics, have taken more blasphemous freedoms with *God*, his *Works*, and his *Word*, than the most unlettered Vulgars of the human race were capable of doing.

every thing, that comes in competition with it; and to consider our supreme Felicity as "*The one Thing needful.*" I intreat the most philosophic Intellect, to enquire, whether this be not the *only* proper view of right Reason. If it be—the reverse must be either Folly, or Infamy: it must be Ignorance, or Vice. For, upon this principle alone can right Reason, genuine Virtue, and real Happiness, be convertible terms. And, they must, *in fact*, mean the same thing.

No Man, who has not previously abandoned both Reason, and Virtue, will contend, that the Pleasures of sense—the least and lowest of all Pleasures—are the best Choice, or the supreme Good: no, nor even mental Pleasures—rising, as they certainly do, in the Scale of human satisfactions—if they be limited to any transitory Objects, animate, or inanimate. It remains then, as a logical and necessary inference, that, the Pleasures, which ought

to be pursued with the utmost fervour, are those, which are spiritual, and endless; or, that Happiness, of which Christianity is the only instrumental Cause, and Source: to reject which, is alike *improvident*, *unsafe*, and *impious**.

* And why improvident, unsafe, and impious? Because, "he, who in this field of Combat, instead of grasping the weapons of his Warfare, is for ever gathering flowers, and catching at butterflies with his unarmed hand; ever making Pleasures his pursuit—must pay for it his vast reversion; and, on opening his final account, shall find himself a beggar—a beggar past beggary; and shall passionately wish, that his very being were added to the rest of his loss.—He shall find too, that *Truth*, *divine Truth*, however through life injured, wounded, suppressed, is insuppressible, victorious, immortal. That, though with mountains overwhelmed, it will one day burst out like the fire of Ætna—visible, bright, and tormenting, as the raging flame."

Observe again—"There are three kinds of Happiness on earth, gradually less and less. There is happiness from the exertion of Reason, *right Reason*: this is the happiness of *a Man*. There is an inferior happiness from the gratification of *Sense*—where Reason is denied: this is the happiness of *a Brute*. And there is a calamitous happiness—where Reason is abused: and this is the happiness of *a Wretch*." It must therefore be true, when understood according to the scriptural statement of things, that, "Reason and Virtue are the sole Beauty and sole

To return however to the sacred Light, we have taken for our Guide through all these difficult paths of Reason, Philosophy, Virtue, and Morals, let us ask, what relation has this Happiness, and all its ingredients, to the Person, and Character, of JESUS CHRIST? who, according to the most accurate definition of these titles, is the very *Essence* of Christianity; and, I will add, of all the Happiness it is designed to communicate*. For, can we have

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Salvation of all. Through all her realms the intelligent Creation must groan without them. The Deity himself is all Reason, and all Virtue, in his nature, his conduct, and commands."

* JESUS—"This," says a Writer of no common piety and erudition, "is a name, in which the whole Gospel lies hid: it is the *Light*, *Food*, and *Medicine* of the soul. No language can *fully* express its import, when applied to the Messiah.—The meaning however is, that, He delivers from all evil—preserves to all good—and maintains the objects of his Salvation, in a state of security, and blessedness, for ever."—CHRIST—or, the Anointed; as being designated to the mediatorial Office, and fitted to sustain the several Characters of a Prophet, a Priest, and a King, for the effectual discharge of that high and important office, by the unlimited Unction of the holy

read the inspired pages with only that curiosity, they are calculated to excite, without perceiving, that, He is the instituted Mean, through which it is conveyed into the Mind, and Heart? that it is all laid up, or deposited, in Him, as in a Treasury. Do we not perceive, that, by the irreversible decree of Heaven, there is no other Way to the enjoyment of it, but by being "IN CHRIST JESUS *?"

Ghost.—All this, it should be noticed, is something totally distinct from the spotless *Example*, which he hath left us. For, we are no where required to imitate Him, either as *a Saviour*, or in his *mediatorial* Character: though we are bound to copy his human Virtues, as closely as possible.

* Whoever pleads the cause of Religion, or Happiness, *in this way*, would merit the severest censure, were he to adopt the language of diffidence, and suspicion. He has a moral sanction for expressing himself with *confidence*. Were he to do otherwise, he might indeed be thought modest, and polite; but, would it not be at the expence of that love of Truth, and Mankind, which ought to be a paramount principle?—It is contended here, with the firmest and most decisive tone, upon the authority of that sacred Tribunal, to which we appeal, that, As true Religion and true Happiness are inseparably connected, by the

No perspicuity of language can render any thing more clear, and indubitable, than this truth—if we subscribe to the apostolical Testimony; which indeed ought to have no irresistible weight with us, but what it derives from its *divine Authority*. Allowing that—we are not only bound to submit to it, without any controversy—but, to enquire, with becoming solicitude, into its true import.

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sovereign Constitution of Heaven, we must remain eternal Strangers to both, unless we seek them "*in* Christ Jesus."

There are, who would have us give up these peculiar *modes of expression*, as grotesque, inelegant, and obsolete. But, Experience has taught us, that we may as well give up Christianity, at once: which, in proportion as it has been accommodated to classical Taste, and modern Refinement, has answered every purpose that Infidelity itself could wish. To modernize the phraseology of Scripture, is perhaps the most effectual method, that can be taken, to subvert original, apostolical Christianity. Were I one of its concealed Enemies, I would most artfully adopt this *unsuspected* plan, to exterminate all its fundamental principles. If the Reader is not perfectly satisfied with the Style, and Beauties, of the holy Scripture, let him consult the writings of bishop Lowth, and Blackwall's sacred Classics.

What is it then, to be "*in Christ Jesus?*" The phraseology is so peculiar, and uncommon, that the most judicious mode, I apprehend, will be, to permit the Scriptures to explain themselves; without obtruding on them any additional comment. To my understanding they appear to intend, by this phrase, *a vital, spiritual,* and *mystical Union of Soul to Him.* Instead of treating this interpretation with aversion, or disgust, it will be more ingenuous, and impartial, to turn your cool attention to the following references—which I subjoin, as my warrant for it.

John xv. 1——8.
1 Cor. xii. 12——14, 26, 27.
Eph. ii. 19——22. . . v. 22——32.
1 Pet. ii. 1——5*.

* Two thirds of the errors, and contradictions, which have disgraced the christian Cause, may, I conceive, be fairly attributed to this radical evil—*the not suffering the Scriptures to explain themselves.* For, though in certain critical difficulties, the aids of human Learning may be expedient, if not necessary—still, in every thing, that be-

Let these passages be consulted with an *unprejudiced* regard to their several contents, and, I presume, it may very boldly be inferred, either that the language of the Scriptures is perfectly unintelligible—or else, that they do certainly press upon us, not merely the expediency, but the *indispensable necessity* of our personal acquaintance with a vital, spiritual, mystical Union to Christ Jesus*: without

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longs to the essential constitution of Christianity, the Bible is its own best Interpreter; and *good marginal references* are of the greatest use. It were to be wished, that those, who associate for the most benevolent purpose of supplying the common people with the Scriptures, would condescend to notice this hint; or compensate for the want of such references, by a short introductory Key to each chapter.

* We are permitted to write about "the Loves of the Plants"—"the Harmony of the Spheres"—and, "the Friendship of the Elements, by which they are *united* together," φιλια η συνεχουσα τα στοιχεια: in that case, we shall be thought ingenious, elegant, philosophic: but, if our subject be that *spiritual Union*, *Friendship*, and *Harmony*, which subsists between the great Head of the Church, and all the living Members of his mystical Body,

which, believing, as I do, that they are "the true Sayings of God," I am bound, as the benevolent Friend of my Kind, to warn them, that, there can be no *christian Piety*—no *christian Virtue*—no *christian*

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then we are supposed to be lost in all the Dreams, and Visions, of Mysticism! Thus men rashly, not to say, impiously, censure, what they do not like, and will not understand. We admit the mystery of the thing. Eph. v. 32. But, what then? Is it more mysterious than the *Self-existence* of the Deity? Οιδα μεν πολλα και επισαμενος δε αυτων τον τροπον· "I know many things, without comprehending the particular manner, how they are so."—But, we have often read of some unhappy Characters, "who *will not* be learned, nor understand; who chuse rather to walk on still in darkness, and rebel against the light."

Can any thing betray more deliberate mental depravity than the objections, which are continually made to the christian Mysteries, when every sound Scholar, and true Philosopher—I may add, every common Observer of nature—must know, that, the Mysteries in Creation, and the Mysteries of Reason, are even more numerous than those of Scripture, and Revelation. Instead of cherishing this unpardonable hatred of Truth, let us meditate, seriously, and deeply, on John vi. 27——58. xvii. 20——23. Gal. ii. 20. Eph. ii. 19——22. Col. i. 27. Hebr. ii. 14. iii. 14. 1. John v. 11, 12, 20. Tota veræ justitiæ, salutis, vitæ, participatio, ex hâc pernecessariâ cum Christo κοινωνια pendet. Nothing, but what is either

Happiness. I have only to request, that this warning may be treated with the importance it deserves. For, in these three things, much more than in the highest eminence of Rank, Property, or even of Intellectuality, consists

THE WHOLE OF MAN.

" In its true light this transient Life regard;
" A state of trial only—not reward.
" Though rough the passage, peaceful is the Port;
" The BLISS is perfect, the Probation short:
" Rise nobly then above terrestrial aims;
" Direct the ardour, which your breast inflames,
" To that pure region of eternal joys,
" Where fear disturbs not, nor possession cloys.
" On holy FAITH's aspiring pinions rise,
" And seek thy GOOD SUPREME above the Skies.
" Know, that RELIGION's sacred treasures lie
" Inviting, open, plain to ev'ry eye;
" For every age, for ev'ry genius fit,
" Nor limited to Science, or to Wit;

" earthly, or sensual, or devilish," will exercise the powers of *a subtle criticism*, in explaining away the mystic and spiritual import of those passages. I would stamp upon the foreheads of such mischievous Perverters of sacred Truth, Ψυχικοι, πνευμα μη εχοντες·—The word Ψυχικος may be found in 1 Cor. ii. 14. Jam. iii. 15. Jude xix.

"To elevated Talents not confin'd,
"But all may learn the Truths for all design'd *.

* How many thousands of the common people are continually told what is their Duty, and instructed in good moral Conduct—who are never informed at all, respecting *the great Importance of divine Truths!* Hence their amazing ignorance of the nature, genius, and design of *Christianity*, whose *Doctrines* are the grand peculiars of its constitution. They are supposed indeed not to be able to comprehend *them:* they are only calculated, say some, to perplex their minds! Why then were they ever revealed? and what a blasphemous reflection is this upon the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of their Author! and what an unwise, injudicious Preacher must St. Paul have been, who laid so vast a stress upon them! chosen, as he was, by the miraculous Call of the Redeemer, to proclaim them to the world. But, what is there perplexing to the weakest Intellect, to be assured, that, "God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but might have everlasting life? that, by Him, all that believe are justified from all things? that, being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ—who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption."—This is *Christianity*; this is *The Gospel*—properly so called: because, this only is *The Way of Salvation.*

It has been said again, "But how are *the Poor* to understand those Doctrines?" To which we need only reply by two or three References, which contain a full and complete Answer to so shameful a Question. Matt. xi. 2——5. . . 1 Cor. i. 26——31. Jam. 2. 5.

" She calls—solicits—courts you to be blest;
" And points to mansions of eternal Rest:
" Press onward then to those delightful plains,
" Where one unbounded Spring for ever reigns."

CHRISTIAN HAPPINESS.

Φυσις δ' αυτη παντος, το διωκειν το αγαθον, φευγειν το κακον——τε γαρ αγαθε συγγενεστερον εδεν. Ταυτε χαριν τα λοιπα παντες παντα πραττωμεν.

Ουσια τε αγαθε, προαιρεσις ποια· τε κακε, προαιρεσις ποια. Τι ων τα εκλος; Υλαι τη προαιρεσει, περι ας αναστρεφομενη τευξεται τε ιδιε αγαθε η κακε *.

Qui fit, Mæcenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem
Seu Ratio dederit, seu Fors objecerit, illa
Contentus vivat; *laudet diversa sequentes* †?
Inde fit, ut raro, qui se vixisse beatum
Dicat, et exacto contentus tempore, vita
Cedat, uti conviva satur, reperire queamus.
. . . . . Audi
Quo rem deducam.

HORAT. SAT.

* Admitting then that the Essence of all Good depends upon a certain Direction of the Mind, or Heart, our highest concern should be, clearly to understand what that disposition is, which is calculated, first to promote, and then to secure, our greatest Good. It is irrational, and disorderly, as well as injurious to our own felicity, to give the *preference*, either in time, or in choice, to the least good. The true Wisdom of man, consists in his understanding what is his *supreme Good*—his true Excellence, in pursuing it—his true Prudence, in securing it—and his true Bliss, in enjoying it. To all this tends our present Investigation: to shew, What is that state, condition, or manner of being, which may be said to constitute our *Happiness*.

† Horace, though basking in the Court and Favour of

IF there be any topic in universal science, in which the human Mind may be allowed to luxuriate, it is that of christian Happiness; or, that peculiar and most exalted

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one of the Cæsars, saw this in his Patron, and felt it in himself. What a miserable being was the emperor Augustus! and, with what reason! The very heathens, who were accustomed to reflect, could discover, from historic fact, and universal experience, that the *present* circumstances of almost every stage and state of life were dissatisfying even to chagrin, restlessness, and disappointment. "Thus, the youth persuades himself that men, who are what they call settled in the world, are incomparably more happy than young people can be at his age! While we think ourselves condemned to live single, solitude seems intolerable; and, when we have associated ourselves with others, we regret the happy days we spent in the tranquillity of solitude! Thus we go on, from fancy to fancy, and from one chimæra to another, till death arrives, subverts all our imaginary prospects of happiness, and makes us know, by our own experience, what the experience of others might have fully taught us long before—that is, that the whole world is full of Vanity; that all ages and conditions have inconveniences peculiar to themselves, and one, which is common to them all; I mean, a character of *disproportion* to our hearts: so that by changing our situation, we often do no more than change our kind of Infelicity." All our happiness consists in search, and expectation, till we seek it in the only quarter, in which it is ever to be found. Is. lv. 2, 3.

species of happiness, which is sanctioned by every Principle, supported by every Promise, and connected with every Precept of Christianity. Let Wit and Genius riot in the pleasures of an uncontrouled Imagination—let them entertain themselves, and others, with the airy dreams of a delighted fancy, and wanton in the regions of romance—while we, in the more temperate exercises of a collected Judgment, are aiming first to discover, and then to dwell in, those, of blissful Reality.

In the course of those solitary musings on the inspired pages, in which both opportunity and inclination have been often indulged, I have been occasionally much impressed with a remark of our divine Teacher to a Jewish auditory. It was pointed, and direct: and, though unquestionably intended for their personal benefit, was perverted by insuperable obstinacy, and prejudice, so as to excite their most

unmerited indignation and resentment. He had said to them, "If I tell you *the Truth* *, why do you not believe me? He,

* "As the Sun sheds his light over the material creation, to be apprehended by the eye, TRUTH is the light shed down from heaven, to be apprehended by the Intellect—so far as the human mind is *qualified* to receive it. For, the difficulty of Truth does not exist so much in the *subjects*, as in *ourselves*; and Truths, which are the strongest and clearest, may sometimes shine upon our minds with the weakest force"—or, with no force at all. Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum *recipientis*. With what resplendency did "The Sun of righteousness" shine among the Scribes, Pharisees, and Hypocrites! but, to how little avail! Their foolish *heart* was darkened; and, though totally blind, they conceited they could see! We are frequently reminded of such characters by too many modern instances of intellectual darkness. John i. 5.

De causa difficultatis in Veritatis cognitione discrepantes sunt sententiæ: alii enim res ipsas hujus difficultatis causam esse; alii nos ipsos esse censent. Minute attention to the operations of the human Mind, as they respect religious truths, has determined my adherence to the latter of these opinions. For one obvious reason why they are not immediately embraced, upon the first fair proposal, is, that they have to contend with a host of *Errors*—which have found previous admission: errors, of Ignorance; of Superstition; of Learning; of Affectation; of Pride: and another more powerful impediment to their access, is, that they attack every corrupt Principle, Prejudice, and

that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Therefore they did not understand or believe, what he had so plainly declared, and though it was the Truth—not because the things themselves were obscure, or unintelligible, but, because the Hearers were not "of God:" very clearly intimating, that they were only so far well affected to God himself, as they were well affected to his Word *.

Passion, of the heart. Is it any marvel then, that divine Truth should have a very hard struggle to obtain a place in the human mind and affections? I deem it morally impossible, without the agency of special Grace.

* "Those, who are not acquainted with the divine Word, and have no *Taste* for it, ought to fear that they are strangers to the divine Nature. Jesus Christ spoke the Words of God, John iii. 34. in the dialect of the kingdom of God; and yet, they who pretended to belong to that kingdom, understood not the idioms and properties of it, but treated them with rudeness and ridicule! The rooted antipathy of men's hearts to the doctrine of Christ, is the true reason of their ignorance of it, and of their errors and mistakes about it. They do not like it, nor love it, and *therefore* they cannot be persuaded to hear it attentively, and without prejudice: how then should they understand it?"

The terms, and the mode, in which this intimation was given, were not indeed attuned to that softest Key of harmony, and sweetness, that most condescending and conciliating manner, in which this great Prophet was accustomed to deliver his doctrine: but, there are times and circumstances, in which "the words of the Wise are as *goads;*" as sharp, as they are sententious and upright; that their pungency and power may penetrate the

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"If men could but be prevailed on heartily to enquire into the *Causes* of their infidelity, and to examine why they do not believe that, which they cannot disprove, they would find themselves reduced to such absurdities, as, unless they are totally shameless, they could not but be ashamed of: for, it will be found, upon ingenuous inquisition, that the true reason, why we do not believe Jesus Christ, is, because we are not willing to part with our vices, to renounce ourselves, and to serve God faithfully: we are not of the christian Religion, because we are not of any: so that, our unbelief of the Redeemer is but another phrase for our practical contempt of the Creator." Allowing it to be the most pitiable, it should be undisguisedly asserted, at the same time, that there is no character upon earth more detestable, than that of the professed Infidel. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. . . 1 John iv. 6.

Heart, and that the serious emotions, they aim to inspire, may be the deeper, and the more lasting. They ought not therefore to be less acceptable on that account*.

To the present period, how numerous are the Characters to be met with among us, the very counterpart of those, so strikingly delineated by the Spirit of ancient prophecy—" Now go, write it before them on a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come; that this is a rebellious people, lying children; children, who will not hear the Law of the Lord: which say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesy not unto

* The words of Truth and Uprightness will always be grateful in proportion to the integrity of those, who hear them. Self-deceivers only wish to be soothed and flattered in their delusions. Divine Verities were never intended to tickle the ear, but to pierce the soul, and to leave an abiding impression there: and the public Teacher, who does not take that aim, is a Traitor to God and to his Word. Heb. iv. 12.

us *right things*—speak unto us *smooth things*—prophesy *deceits.*" Is. xxx*.

* It should be laid down as an almost infallible maxim, that, Those, who preach the smoothest things, are the most likely to prophesy Deceits. The sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal may soothe the Conscience into *dread* repose; but, those, who mean us well, will "cry aloud, and spare not. Isa. lviii. 1." Sensuality, Ignorance, and Pride, are all of them fascinated with the Arts of Eloquence—but, they shrink back at the Eloquence of the Heart. They object not to being pleased—but, they hate to be probed. What then? If a christian Instructor possess not that sublime magnanimity, with which his Bible ought to animate him, should he ever fall below the

Justum, et tenacem propositi virum
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni
Mente quatit solida?

Can the richest, the purest imagination, picture to itself a more exalted Character, than that of a Messenger of the most High, cloathed indeed with unaffected humility, but faithful to the commission with which he is entrusted—burning with zeal for the divine Glory, and for the success of his Cause—and looking down with a noble disdain on every person, and every consideration, that would seduce his mind from the supreme objects he has in view? And, what are they? The propagation of revealed Truth, the establishment of christian Virtue, and the promotion of that Happiness, which is the result of both.

Is it any matter of surprise then, that the Author of our Religion should have said to his select and faithful Disciples,

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It must be admitted indeed, that such an elevated Character will be exposed to circumstances of peculiar difficulty, and may expect to meet with but little encouragement. For, while a Man, who speaks or writes against Revelation, shall acquire celebrity, and be accounted a *Philosopher*, and a *Wit*; and the bolder steps he takes in that line of blasphemy, the surer he is of being esteemed *a Genius*; the more courage and ardour a person betrays in the service of uncorrupted Christianity, the more prepared he ought to be for almost universal ridicule and contempt! This however is nothing new. Mat. xi. 15——19.

Let no humble Copyist of such Preachers look for the secular Emoluments of this life. They cannot take a worse road to them. "Having food and raiment, let them be therewith content." Satis viatici ad Cœlum. For who does not see, that, "If a man preaches Christ, that he is the End of the Law, the Glory of the Gospel, and the Fulness of Salvation to all that believe—and that, if he mentions, with the ardour of Sincerity, the assistance and direction of the holy Spirit, his character shall be blasted, and himself rendered odious by the force of some *name*—which, in such cases, always signifies what the Imposers please to mean, and the people to hate."[1] It was so from the commencement of the christian Church; as appears in "Bingham's Antiquities." There are many names of this kind now in vogue. The

"But, blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." And why, *blessed?* Because, in no other Volume, and in no other Way, is it possible for us to discover what are the Nature, the Operation, the Causes, or the Means, of *true Happiness*; to apologize for expatiating on which, to this extent, is, from the importance of the thing, and the universality of the concern, idle and superfluous. For, what but this is the ultimate issue of all the different pursuits of right Reason, sound Philosophy, christian Virtue, and moral Excellence? Why do I investigate

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matter is, "many things may be ridiculed under false titles, which it would not be quite *so decent* to laugh at under their true ones. But, through *evil report*, and *good* report, lies the road of a Christian. For a *Deceiver* he must be content to pass, till a resurrection to immortality shall demonstrate him to be none, and "Wisdom be justified of all her children." But, "woe unto you, when all men speak well of you." The best Doctrines, the best Arguments, the best Characters, avail but very little against the malignity of Prejudice, Pride, and Passion, even in this age of *boasted* Liberality, Candour, and Scepticism!

the first—cultivate the second—aspire to the third—and so highly appreciate the last? but, that, in each of these Attainments, I may not grasp at the shadow, but enjoy the substance, of solid and enduring Bliss.

Let us range then a little longer in that Garden of the Lord, that Eden of holy delights, that only Paradise on earth—THE SACRED SCRIPTURE; and gather a few more of those celestial Flowers, which have been planted by the beneficent Author of all good—which are watered with the dew of Heaven—enlivened and beautified by "The Sun of righteousness"—and designed to exhilarate the spirits of those, who are taught by special Grace to know their value, and to inhale their refreshing and diversified sweets.

You have no hesitation of mind, I hope, in agreeing with me, that THE BIBLE is the only infallible Source of instruction respecting the chief Good, or supreme

Felicity, of man: that it stands, not only unrivalled, but unequalled, in perfection; and leaves every thing else, in this grand particular, at an inexpressible distance. It may be as well, however, fully to settle this point, before we advance another step—that we may proceed with the most entire unanimity.

I aver then, in the rich and comprehensive style of a Prophet, a Poet, and a King—no common assemblage—that—but, let us advert to the passage itself, in Ps. xix. 7——11 *.

* What an Eulogy is this on *the Perfection* of the sacred Writings! the perfection of their Utility—their Certainty—their Purity—their Rectitude—their Value—their Comforts—their Peace—and their Sweetness; which no man can possibly enjoy, unless he has *a taste* for them: any more than a person can enjoy the sublime beauties of Homer, or the mellifluous charms of Virgil, who has no *taste* for Poetry. But, whether we relish this Volume of divine Grace, The holy Bible, or not, it is not only "the Testimony of God, but the sole infallible Standard of true Theology: and, when Reason has once cleared the path to this Foundation of our most holy Faith, the heavenly Fountain, from which the mysteries of Religion spontaneously flow—the *Fruits* of the Vineyard of the

Every clause here is significant, and instructive; but, I mean to lay the greatest stress upon those, which more immediately relate to the felicitating properties of this Book of the Law; or, which represent "The Oracles of God" as supereminently paramount to the whole visible Creation, considered as a source of substantial happiness. In *that* indeed, the glory of his Goodness can never be adequately described, or sufficiently adored; but, in *Them*, the Eloquence of

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Lord remain to be gathered with diligence, and preserved with care; and to be so plentifully distributed among men, that they may be enjoyed by all, in the easiest and most advantageous way."—To this end, let the Scriptures be allowed to explain themselves: let them be their own Interpreter. For, as one of another century well remarked, "God knows what a multitude of meanings the Learning and the Wit of man imagineth to himself in these Scriptures, which neither Moses, the Prophets, or the Apostles, ever conceived."—"Refinements on words and phrases, twisted by the subtlety of invention into every shape out of *the right one*, have replenished many a bulky folio, which had much better have been consigned to oblivion."

Angels would be defective. "The Law of the Lord is *perfect*. The Statutes of the Lord are right, *rejoicing* the Heart;" and, with no corrupting or momentary flash of Joy—but, with a Joy, which is unspeakable, holy, and sublime: "more to be desired, therefore, than gold"—surpassing by infinite degrees all the stores of perishable Wealth; "sweeter also than honey"—or, much to be preferred, because more durable and satisfying, in the Pleasures they bestow, to all the transitory and debasing gratifications of Sense: "and, *in* keeping of them there *is* great reward *."

* Some of our Characters of exalted genius, and superior sagacity, in their own conceit, flatter themselves, that they deserve well of the community, for attempting to emancipate their minds from being *shackled* by the belief of the christian Revelation! But,

"What shall the Man *deserve* of human kind,
"Whose wondrous skill and industry combin'd,
"Shall prove—what argument could never yet—
"THE BIBLE an Imposture, and a Cheat?
"The praises of the Libertine profess'd,
"The worst of men—and curses of the best.
"Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes—
"The dying, trembling at the awful close—

Godliness is in itself, in its own nature, great Gain: it brings with it a certain peaceful Serenity of soul: it is favoured with a foretaste of that Blessedness, which shall never have an end: even now, the Religion, we propose, is alike the health, the honour, and the peace, of its Possessor; and, without enlarging upon that cordial balm of Hope, which it administers to the departing Spirit, trembling on the confines of an eternal state, it lessens, as well as sanctifies, the manifold afflictions of this transient Scene, and improves the comforts, however few they may be, which the divine bounty has provided for our support through this vale of tears *.

" Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd,
" The thousands, whom the world forbids to rest—
" Where should *they* find—those comforts at an end
" THE SCRIPTURE yields—or hope to find, *a Friend?*
" Sorrow might muse herself to madness then,
" And, seeking exile from the sight of men,
" Bury herself in solitude profound,
" Grow frantic with her pangs, and bite the ground."

* Such are *indeed* the inestimable treasures discovered by those, whom the Lamp of truth divine illuminates!

Upon what other principle indeed can we suppose the inspired Writings would call away our first attention, from all sublunary pursuits, to those, which they so pressingly urge upon our affectionate regard? Why should they enjoin us to seek more diligently, to covet more earnestly, and to love more fervently, what they enforce upon us, than all the alluring acquisitions, with which the World attempts to fascinate, and bribe us? As when they say, Is. lv. 2, 3. Matt. vi. 19——33. John vi. 27.

Upon what principle, but that, for which we are now contending, could the most consummate Master of all human

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" Thy Lamp, mysterious Word!
" Which whoso sees, no longer wanders lost
" With intellects bemaz'd in endless doubt—
" But runs the road of Wisdom.
" Till Thou art heard, imaginations vain
" Possess the heart; and fables, false as hell,
" Yet deem'd oracular, lure down to death
" The uninform'd and heedless souls of men."

Wisdom have poured such comparative contempt on every thing, which the Children of this World are habituated to treat as the chief Good of man? "Vanity of vanities, said the Preacher—all is Vanity." But you, perhaps, are of a totally different opinion. Most assuredly, then, you are no Solomon.

"What!" you exclaim—"the Riches of the world, the Pleasures of the world, the Titles, the Honours, the Esteem, the Friendship, of the world—do you mean to affirm, that they are all *Vanity?*"—Unquestionably; in a comparative view: for the same reason, as we assert yon evening Star to have no brilliancy, in the presence of the meridian Sun. To the deluded Sensualist, they are every thing; but, to the Man, who perceives, and consults, his real dignity, they are trifles, and toys*.

* It is by no means necessary to send mankind to the Scriptures to teach them this Lesson. Slow and dull as they *chuse* to be in learning it, every day, every hour, every family, every village, every city, every kingdom,

Arguing then upon our Data, can there be any remaining doubt, that the Scrip-

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every age, in all history, is proclaiming it to the *experience* of all mankind. There is not an heathen Moralist, who does not ridicule and satirize human Nature, in the sharpest terms, for its egregious folly, its wilful Insanity, in sacrificing right Reason, Conscience, Integrity, and, of course, its only substantial Happiness to the most vapid satisfactions.

Audire, atque togam jubeo componere, quisquis
Ambitione mala, aut argenti pallet amore;
Quisquis luxuria, ...
Aut alio mentis morbo calet: huc propius me,
Dum doceo *insanire* omnes, vos ordine adite.
Virtus, fama, decus, divina humanaque pulchris
Divitiis parent!
Nimirùm *insanus* paucis videatur; eo quòd
Maxima pars hominum morbo jactatur eodem.—
Qui species alias Veri, scelerisque, tumultu
Permistas, capiet, commotus habebitur: atque
Stultitiane erret, nihilum distabit, an ira —
Cum prudens scelus ob Titulos admittis inanes,
Stas animo? et purum est, vitio tibi cum tumidum
est cor?
. . . . . Ergo ubi prava
Stultitia, hic summa est *Insania.*
Quisnam igitur sanus? Qui non stultus.

HOR. SAT.

And, how many Fools are there, who persuade themselves, that they are minding *the main chance!* Such, I

tures are the instrumental Source of the supreme Happiness of every human Being? A question, or two, however, in reference to this interesting theme, may be started to great advantage. What, for instance, is the *primary Object* of *this* Happiness?

The very first article, and ground, of all the Religion, Virtue, and Happiness, there are in this world, is, the idea of God: not such a God, as we form to ourselves by that Ignis fatuus, which we have been used to call the Light of nature, reason, and philosophy; but, *The God of Revelation:* for, as to us there is but one God, this is the only true God: and, "this is Life eternal"—which, according to sacred phraseology, is a convertible term for Happiness—"to know thee *the only true God*,

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mean, as those described by the pen of inspiration in Luke xii. 15——21. No man was ever really wise, who did not inscribe, upon all that this world can give him, as it respects his true dignity and bliss, Detur vacuum.

and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent *."

* To talk of a *Religion of nature*, flowing out of *a Light of nature*, or founded upon mere principles of uninstructed, unenlightened *Reason*, is, in fact, as great a Romance, as ever distracted the brain of a Quixote. Nothing can be more adapted to the regions of Utopia. Our respect for great names has no influence here. Learned men ought to be ashamed of advancing such an idea. It is a palpable contradiction to the real history of Man; and the only truth, on this subject, is, that, as the human Mind has no *innate ideas*, a fortiori it cannot have any *innate principles*. For, what are principles, whether right or wrong, but an assemblage of ideas? But, this said imaginary Religion of nature presupposes that we have both innate ideas, κοιναις εννοιαις, and innate principles ingenerated by the power of mere Reason; that they are universal and attainable by all men—clear—and, as far as they go, perfect. Would any one, who has not fallen into this strange delusion, suppose it possible for men of science, investigation, and philosophy, to have advanced such a position? It is certain, however, that some great characters—in human estimation—have been so very incautious, to say no worse, as to assert, that, "this is the Ground-work, on which Revelation is built; the very bottom of *all* the duties, which God requires of us: so that, whatever God shall reveal would signify nothing to us, unless this Religion and Light of nature were first known and believed!"—I should be sorry to add to my numberless infirmities *such* nonsense, falshood, and blasphemy. Indeed, one of these grave Dealers in

Clearly to comprehend, in what sense, and manner, the divine Being is to be considered as the primary and perpetual Source of unfading bliss—"The Fountain of living waters"—the most expeditious method, I can devise, will be, thoroughly

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fiction has unwittingly subverted his own problem, and written himself down, by acknowledging, that, "There are whole *nations*, which seem to have very little notion of God; and that, in all ages, men have had false and unworthy notions of him, or superstitious apprehensions concerning him, and fall into the most absurd idolatry: that, in the heathen world, there were but few, who either discovered the principal truths, or studied the duties, of natural Religion." Where then was their Reason, that universal Law and Light of nature, which dictates to *every man* the first principles of Religion? It will be found, I apprehend, on fair enquiry, that, if we prætermit rational Instruction, and divine Revelation, this Religion, Law, and Light of nature will prove, after all, nothing more than savage barbarity, and idolatrous superstition. Still, it is a wonderful favourite with some Writers, who, as public Preceptors, ought to know better. But, so it is; and we need not travel into foreign climes, in search of Adepts in the ancient philosophic art, of "professing to be wise, and becoming Fools"—"by changing the Truth of God into a Lie," and worshipping human Reason more than divine Revelation.

to digest the import of the following Scriptures, according to the arrangement, in which I shall now dispose them. Deut. xxxiii. 29. Ps. cxlvi. 5. Prov. xvi. 20. Ps. cxliv. 15.

From the contemplation of these passages, I have been led to infer, that, totally irrespective of all the inferior considerations of Fame, Wealth, or Honour, the *supreme* Happiness of Man consists in his having the God of Nature, Providence, and Grace, as he has exhibited himself to us in his own Revelation, for his Saviour, his Help, his Hope, his Refuge, his Trust, and, in a word, for his God. Hebr. viii. 10——12*.

* Statuimus itaque solum Deum optimum maximum esse summum hominis Bonum—sic docente passim Scripturâ: Gen. xv. 1. . . Ps. xvi. 5. . . xxxvi. 10. John xvii. 3. . . 1 Cor. xv. 28: et dictante ipsa Ratione; quæ soli Deo omnes summi Boni vindicat conditiones. Nam Deus continet omne bonum: est finis simpliciter ultimus in quo necessariè est acquiescendum: solus perfectè sufficit satiando appetitui nostro: et est summè desiderabilis; Ps. lxxii. 25, 26.

But, what is the discriminative *Character* of those, who are in a *capacity* to enjoy this happiness? For, the many have no more *Taste* for it, than a Brute has for the Newtonian philosophy, or for the most enchanting harmony of sounds. Let us transport ourselves, for a moment, in imagination, to the foot of that consecrated Mount, from which the incarnate Wisdom of God delivered a series of ethical lessons, which have stood the test, and merited, as they have received, the admiration of eighteen Centuries: let us listen to him, as we may presume the athenian Literati did to Paul, when preaching on Mars-hill, with anxious silence, and enquiry, while he is pronouncing his *Beatitudes*—before which, all that is called great, and noble, and illustrious, in this world, must retire, humbled, confounded, and abashed. For, upon whom, and upon what, does he pronounce them? Search, and see; and mark it well.

Matt. v. 1——12*.

* The utmost energies of Learning and Philosophy could not possibly frame any thing more repugnant to the

I start only one Question more—which it would be almost unpardonable, as bordering upon malevolence, to omit. What

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general Opinions, Maxims, Spirit, and Manners of the world, than these Assertions of the divine Author of Christianity: more than three-fourths of whose professed disciples have not taken so much as *the first step* in *his* way to Religion, or Happiness. On the contrary, their movements are altogether retrograde; they are in a totally different direction. They are not even "halting between two opinions:" they are every thing *but* "poor in spirit, and meek, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness!" What do the Lovers of money, of pleasure, of fame, of fashion, either know or care about these things? In vain do we pretend to desire the only Happiness, to which every real Christian is aspiring, and much less are we in pursuit of it, till the following injunction becomes a principle of habitual practice; 1 John ii. 15——17. Such very broad hints may perhaps be thought rude, and will give offence: but, it is highly expedient, that mankind should sometimes meet with persons, who are disinterested and manly enough to break through the squeamish rules of Politeness, for the sake of promoting their essential Good; by aiming a bold stroke at *the Heart*. So much playing about the head, and tickling the ear, has seldom been attended with either use, or benefit: people are pleased, without being profited: they admire the Speaker, and forget themselves: they hang, for the moment, on the fascinating sound, but, it leaves no more impression, than Xerxes' stripes on the sea. John iii. 11.

are *the Means*, by which all this Blessedness is to be acquired—preserved—and increased?

There are divine Institutions, or Ordinances, appointed for that end, by the sovereign Head of the Church; with which, if you have any pious solicitude to become acquainted, in order to pay them due attention, and observance, you may study them at your leisure, in Eph. iv. 8——16. 1 Thess. v. 12——23*. If you consult

* "Every man, as rational, and unless he has resigned all his intellectual and moral Faculties to the slavery of Sense, must propose and desire some *End*. The end of all Beings is said to be, the perfection of their nature. The perfection of any nature is, enjoying all the *Happiness* of which it is capable.—So again, to desire the end, is to desire the *Means* also. The Means to attain Happiness, are, to pursue those measures, which He has ordained, upon whose Favour the bestowing of it entirely depends. Therefore the *Means* of *Salvation*, *Grace*, and *Happiness*, are one and the same: and an absolute compliance with the revealed Will of God, is the whole of Religion, and the End of man: neither is there any thing more required of a Christian, but that he receive all the parts of divine Revelation with a docility, and disposition, prepared to assent to all truths coming from God; and

the Man of the World, the Man of Pleasure, the Man of Honour, or the Man of Fashion, upon *these* Means of human Felicity, though of celestial origin, he will treat them, as he does the holy Records, in which they are digested, with ridicule, contempt, and scorn!

From this superficial survey of a subject, to which the most exalted Genius and Talents ought to be devoted, for the sake of "Man and all Humanity," it is, alas! too obvious, that nothing can be more discordant than the various systems of Happiness, which we usually form to ourselves, and That, which the Wisdom and Goodness of Heaven have proposed to us.

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submit his Mind and Heart to whatsoever shall appear to bear that character."

Such are the constituted *Means* of christian Happiness: but, in classing the several Orders of Society, in relation to Christianity, what with the rich and great Scum, which rises *above* them, the light and empty Froth, which floats *about* them, and the gross Sediment which sinks *beneath*, what a comparatively small proportion remains, to pay any proper regard to them! Matt. vii. 13, 14.

They are like two parallel lines: they can never unite.

As the Friend of my species, and however grotesque, or absurd, such advice may sound, and however inefficacious it may prove, in these days of Infidelity, and Dissipation, I cannot forbear to recommend the cultivation of this view of happiness, for every purpose of general utility; as the best Antidote to all the false schemes, in the pursuit of which our Folly must be punished with the pains and tortures of corroding disappointment; and as the only infallible Remedy for that disgust of life, which, at a certain period of our existence, we are propense to cherish. Such indeed is the almost inevitable lot of man, in a State so fluctuating, and checquered; in which "he never *is*, but always *to be* blest," unless his Soul is elevated above the perishing things of time and sense, and fixed there, where alone true Joys are to be found*.

* "We enter the world as an enchanted place. While the charm lasts, we speak of it with raptures, and ima-

The only available Art then, of meliorating our mortal condition, and of raising it to the highest pitch of excellence, and peace, to which it can attain, is, sedulously to promote *a Taste* for unaffected Piety, for pure Devotion, and for moral Grandeur *. Because, nothing

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gine we have found the supreme Good. We think, that riches have no wings—that splendid fortune hath no reverse—that the great have no sorrows, the prosperous no pains—that friends have no fickleness—and that health and youth will never change! But, as it is not long before we recover our senses, we become disgusted with the world, in proportion as we have been infatuated by it, and our vexation and disappointment are as great, as our fondness had been extravagant, and irrational. Thus, some are disgusted with life from a principle of Melancholy; others, of Misanthropy; others, from Discontent; and others from an inordinate and excessive attachment to it. They press it to the very dregs, till they have totally exhausted all the harmless satisfactions, which the moderate enjoyment of it was intended to administer."

There is, however, what may be termed a pious disgust with life; arising from a rectitude of Mind—a moral refinement of Heart—and a delicacy of Conscience—peculiar to those, who are "created anew in Christ Jesus:" and this, I believe, is a never-failing concomitant of christian Happiness. Ps. lv. 6. . cxx. 5.

* I have been repeatedly struck with the polite and eager attention, with which persons are regarded in the

short of this can with any shadow of propriety, or fitness, be said to constitute

The supreme Happiness of Man:

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higher walks of life, when they advance any thing that relates to literary *Taste*; and, still more, to a *Taste* for the fine Arts. Who would not listen to us, if we could converse on the Standard, the Foundation, the Principles, the Utility, and the Truth of Taste, as Lord Kaims, Burke, Hume, and others, have written?

But now, let us suppose an *obsolete* kind of Animal, in this rank of company, who should introduce the *unfashionable* topic of *religious Taste*—a Taste for divine things: a Taste for piety, for devotion, for the moral Sublime!—"Why, Sir, you are going to *preach*; it is not *Sunday*; we are not *at Church!*"

I contend, however, that this most unusual sort of Taste is *the highest polish* of human Reason; the *most elegant Accomplishment* of the intellectual Man; that it pours contempt upon the wretched insignificance of *all* artificial Acquirements, and political distinctions: that every other Taste is *low*, *mean*, *vulgar*, in the comparison: that every Taste beside, is a taste of Sense, this of Soul: that it never can be either a false Taste, or a bad Taste: for, it is refined, elevating, immortal. The Foundation of it, is in the Heart; the Standard of it, in the Bible; the Principles of it, such as I have here presumed to offer to general examination; the Utility of it, beyond all expression; and the Truth or Reality of it must depend altogether on the secret influence of heavenly Grace.

and, what gives it more than half its worth, is, that it is confined to no situa-

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Above all things, let it be noticed, that, no person is in *a capacity* to enjoy christian Happiness, while he is destitute of *this* Taste.

This may not be a style of high-breeding: but, is it not, of *good*-breeding? It may not be the language of *Fashion:* so much the better "I know not, says the justly celebrated Author of "an Essay on *Truth*," whether honesty, plain-dealing, and simple manners, were ever made the pattern of courtly behaviour: but, I have been told, that, there is not a Court on earth, in which a man of the strictest Virtue, and best Understanding, would not appear ridiculous, if he were unacquainted with the established forms. The Customs of the Court are imitated by the higher ranks; the middle ranks follow the higher; and the people come after, as fast as they can."—In short, sacred Truth and a pious Taste will be cultivated only by a certain description of persons, of whom it has been disdainfully said, "their ways are quite of *another* fashion."

Disce: sed ira cadat naso, rugosaque sanna,
Dum veteres nugas tibi de pulmone revello.
Tibi recto vivere talo
Ars dedit? et veri speciem dignoscere calles,
Ne qua subærato mendosum tinniat auro?
Quæque sequenda ferent, quæque evitanda vicissim,
Illa prius cretâ, mox hæc carbone, notasti?
Hæc mea sunt, teneo, cum verè dixeris, esto
Ornatus, comis, sapiens, felix.

tion or circumstance of life: it is equally accessible to all, who have "the Oracles of God" in their hand: it requires no uncommon advantages of education, science, or philosophy; for, it is the gift of Heaven.

"Read and revere the sacred Page: a page
"Where triumphs Truth, and Happiness: a prize
"Which not the whole creation could produce;
"Which not the conflagration shall destroy;
"In nature's ruin not one letter lost:
"'Tis printed in the mind of God for ever:
"Which bids us seek Realities, not dreams—
"Safety and peace, not hazard and alarm;
"Man's heart, at once, inspirits and serenes;
"Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys:
"Sweetens life's sharpest pang with cordial Hope,
"Soothing each sorrow of the grief-worn heart,
"With future prospects of consummate Bliss.
"Bliss, past man's power to paint it; time's, to close.
"In such a world, and such a nature, these
"Are needful fundamentals of Delight:
"These fundamentals give delight indeed;
"Delight, pure, delicate, and durable;
"Delight, unshaken, masculine, divine;
"A constant, and a sound, but *serious* joy.
"If there be weight in *an Eternity*,
"Let the wise listen, and be wiser still."

2 Tim. ii. 7.

The Writer embraces the opportunity, a vacant page allowed him, to say, that he has not generally referred to the Authorities, so frequently quoted in these Strictures—because, he has taken such liberties with most of them, as might not be approved. He has altered both words and phrases, whenever they interfered with his ideas: he has omitted, or inserted, whole sentences, as best accorded with his Design. With what propriety or honour, after this, could he subjoin their respective Names? And indeed, he would not be understood to lay any *decisive* stress upon any Authority, but that of, *The sacred Volume*; which, in all essential points expresses Truth with the most artless Simplicity, and without any of the *profound* and *imposing* affectations of human Science: which, for the more part, only tend to disguise, perplex, and corrupt it.

CHRISTIAN HAPPINESS.

Ει προσεξητε, και συνιητε τα λεγομενα, φρονιμοι και ευδαιμονες εσεσθε· ει δε μη, αφρονες, και κακοδαιμονες, και πικροι, και αμαθεις γενομενοι, κακως βιωτισθε· υμεις αν προσεχετε, και μη παρακβετε.

Κεβητ. πιναξ.

Quod magis ad nos
Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitamus: utrumne
Divitiis homines, an sint Virtute beati:
Et quæ sit natura boni, summumque quid ejus.
. . . . . Sapere aude;
Incipe. Vivendi rectè qui prorogat horam
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

HORATII SAT.

" Hermit hoar, in solemn cell
" Wearing out life's evening grey,
" Strike thy bosom, Sage, and tell,
" WHAT IS BLISS, and, WHICH THE WAY."—
Thus I spoke—and speaking sigh'd;
Scarce repress'd the starting tear;
When the hoary Sage replied,
Come, my Friend, and, *read it here.*"
Tolle, lege.

UPON finishing the last sentence on a subject, so intimately connected with the being of Man, I supposed, that I had

taken leave of that discussion: but, during a short interval of pause, in the prosecution of the present undertaking, I have felt a strong propensity to indulge myself in a few additional remarks—which have either occurred to my own mind, or have fallen in my way; and which, though unaccompanied with the charms of Eloquence, can hardly fail to please. For, in a World, so circumstanced *, the very *idea* of Happiness is a secondary relief from the many surrounding sorrows, from which the most prosperous and exalted condition is scarcely exempt †. Bitter experience

* "It requires no great elevation of soul, to observe, that nothing in this world is productive of true contentment: that our pleasures are vain and fugitive; our troubles innumerable and perpetual: and that, after all, death, which threatens us every moment, must, in the compass of a few years—perhaps, of a few days—put us into the eternal condition of *Happiness*, or *Misery*, or *Nothing*. Between us, and these three great periods, or states, no barrier is interposed, but *Life!* the most brittle thing in all nature." PASCAL.

† Sæpius ventis agitatur ingens
Pinus; et celsæ graviore casu
Decidunt turres; feriuntque summas
Fulmina montes.

has indeed compelled many to search for that felicity in the peaceful and lowly Cottage, which they in vain expected in the enviable Mansion.

It is universally admitted, I believe, that, if there be such a thing as an innate practical Principle in the human soul, it is, that every Individual pants for happiness, by an irresistible necessity. But then, how melancholy it is to notice, what is perhaps as unexceptionably certain, that, all mankind agree to seek for it in some imaginary scheme *: and, in investigating

* Thus, " some have sought after Felicity in honour and authority; others, in wealth; others, in science; and others, in sensual pleasure. Man is at a loss where to *fix himself*, and how to recover his rank in the world. He is unquestionably out of his way: he feels within himself the small remains of his once happy state—which he is now unable to retrieve: and yet, this is what he is constantly pursuing; always with solicitude, and never with success; encompassed with darkness, which he can neither escape, nor penetrate. A few philosophers indeed could advance so far, as rightly to apprehend, that, *The true Good* ought to be such as all may possess at once, without diminution, and without contention: and such,

the Cause of a mistake so general, as well as fatal, our maturest reflection cannot be satisfied with ascribing it to any one source, but that, of their utter ignorance of *its true nature.* They run about with the dark Lanthorn of their Reason, in pursuit of *Good*, as Diogenes did, to find *an honest man;* but, alas! how seldom do they make the discovery! Neither is it at all surprising—when it is recollected, that their intellectual Blindness misleads them to take every direction for this purpose, excepting that, which is at all likely to crown their labour with success*.

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as no man can be deprived of against his Will: but, they were unable to attain this; and, instead of a solid substantial Happiness, took up with the empty shadow of a fantastic Virtue." PASCAL.

Enimvero pro verâ Virtute larvam et cassam imaginem, quæ grandiloquens inter cruciatus, in eo tota est ut homo speciosiùs sit miser. Nam absque Dei *verâ* cognitione, et pietate, omnis virtus evanescit, et est titulus sine re: cujus pietatis vim ne κατ' σκιᾳ quidem intellexerunt Philosophi.

* Nunc mihi quid suades post damnum temporis, et spes
Deceptas? Festinat enim decurrere velox

Need we any other excuse then, from propriety or benevolence, for endeavouring to throw meridian day-light on a topic, in which all are equally interested, and with which every breast, it may be presumed, will be alike inspired? For, may we not confidently affirm, that, it is not more a matter of Duty, than of Wisdom and Intereſt, to make our true, that is, our chief Good our principal Care? first, to use all diligence, to learn wherein it really consists—that we may not be infatuated by illusive appearances, or dazzled by false lights; and then, to exert no less activity, to possess, and enjoy it. If any thing can be called amiable, in the character of Humanity, what can be more so, than to lend our mutual aid to assist each other in this grand pursuit? Especially, if the observation of an ancient

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Flosculus angustæ, miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio?—. . . . Altera major
Spes superest.

Ethiologist be but too just, that, immediately on launching into the perilous ocean of life, "all men seek *apparent* Good: nor are they masters of their own Imagination: but, every man frames to himself a different Good according to his Complexion*."

Supposing too, that any kind of Science is indeed valuable, the more accurate, and the more extensive our attainments in that Science, the more valuable. How anxious then ought we to be, to have ideas the most clear, and distinct, the most adequate, and full, in *The Science of Happiness* †! Were not this irresistibly obvious

* Ταυτα αν τινα ειη; Πλουτος δηλαδη, και δοξα, και ευμενεια, και τεκνα, και τυραννιδες, και βασιλειαι, και ταλλα οσα τουτοις παραπλησια. Οι δε δια την αγνοιαν, και την πλανην, ουκ εφιστασι ποια εστιν η αληθινη οδος η εν τω βιω. Κεβητ. πιν.

† Αλλη οδος ουκ εστιν επι την αληθινην παιδειαν αγουσα. Της ψευδοπαιδειας εραται, ηπατημενοι, οιομενοι μετα της αληθινης παιδειας συνομιγειν. Τινες αν καλουνται ουτοι; Οι μεν ποιηται, οι δε ρητορες, οι δε διαλεκτικοι, οι δε μουσικοι, οι δε γεωμετραι, οι δε αστρολογοι, οι δε ηδονικοι, οι δε κριτικοι, και οσοι αλλοι τουτοις εισι παραπλησιοι. Ποια αν η οδος εστιν, η φερουσα επι την αληθινην παιδειαν; Ορας ανω τοπον τινα εκεινον, οπου ολιγοι κατοικει, αλλ' ερημος δοκει ειναι; Αυτη τοινυν εστιν η η οδος, η αγουσα προς την αληθινην παιδειαν. Κεβητ. πιν.

to common perception, I might expose myself to deserved censure for superadding any further strictures on a theme, never to be lightly dismissed; but rather, to be presented in all the various views, that can possibly invite our regard.

According to our statement then, *The true Happiness* of man is never to be separated from his *chief Good*: for, his chief Good is the essence of its constitution; the sine quâ non. There are, no doubt, secondary and inferior goods—both in quality, and in duration; and all are to be estimated, and may be lawfully desired, according to their real worth. But, what is the language of right Reason, in this case? Is it not, that all greater Good, in point of

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It is evident, from hence, that the ancient Philosophy of the higher order had light enough to perceive, that no human acquisitions whatever ought to be considered as the true Learning or Wisdom of Man: neither is it *honest*, or *benevolent*, to suffer such an idea to prevail: but, we do suffer it, if we take no pains to suppress it.

quality, and *duration*, is to be chosen, and preferred to every lesser Good, in point of quality, and duration? Is it not, that every present Good, whatever may be its value, is to be rejected, when it comes in competition with any future Good of *infinitely* greater value? Is it not, that the greatest and most perfect of all possible Good is to be pursued with the greatest ardour and perseverance of mind? I appeal to the best understanding of every human Being, whether these are not the unanswerable, imperious dictates of *right Reason*. What then must be the Conduct of that man, let his literary endowments be what they may, who is habitually living and acting against them? What a Sacrifice is he making! Can the veriest Idiot on earth make a greater *?

* The *Talents*, which the great Lord and Proprietor of the Universe has committed to our trust, and for which we are to render a strict account, at the final Audit, are many, and various: such as Wealth, Power, Influence, Learning, the holy Scriptures, and the like. But, though different Persons have in the general dispensations of Pro-

There is no practical Opinion more readily embraced in the world, by persons of every rank, and description—none more injurious—nor any that ought to be more vehemently protested, by those, who cultivate the kind Affections—than, that Theology is not the business of every man—but, the study and province of an exclusive Profession *. A Maxim this,

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vidence different talents, all are presumed to have that of *Reason:* and, the only proper use of reason, is, to *reason aright:* otherwise, we are, strictly speaking, *irrational:* which we may be, either from extreme weakness, or from great depravity.

* Astonishing! For, what is intended by *Theology*, in its more general definition—but, that System of revealed Truth, which is to teach us the Art of living *wisely*, *piously*, and *happily?* and, will any one be so absurd, as to limit this exalted Privilege, and Dignity, to an exclusive Profession? Will not every Man, who has not renounced the highest distinction of his Nature, be ambitious of living in *this* style? Will he chuse to transfer all his interest, in Wisdom, Piety, and Happiness, to those official characters more particularly denominated, Theologians? What an extravagance of Folly is this! And yet, how prevalent! Should not our public Teachers *cry aloud* against so perilous an absurdity? O ye! who are appointed to be THE LIGHTS, and THE GUIDES, of the

which, like the innocence of Error, is fraught with endless mischief. For, what is the immediate consequence? That people necessarily fall into the dangerous habit of neglecting the *only* Mean, or Instrument, by which they can attain the knowledge of their supreme Happiness, or chief Good. For, the proper idea of *Divinity*, as a Science, is, that it is *The Science of human Happiness*; or that, which is designed to instruct us in its *Nature*, *Object*, and *End**.

You are a Man of title, of fortune, of fashion, of taste, of learning—and, you

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world, how will ye answer it to the great Lord and Master, you profess to serve, if, through your inattention, or insensibility, immortal souls should perish in so fatal, but, alas! common a delusion?

* Græcia lingua multa habet vocabula, quibus exprimat beatitudinem vel summum bonum: το αγαθον, το καλον, το αριστον, το εσχατον, ευτυχια, ευδαιμονια, ευπραξια, synonyma sunt. Sacris scripturis speciatim placuit vox μακαρισμος —quasi μεγα χαιρων, in Aristot. ethic; vel, απο τε μαλιστα χαιρειν, Scultet.

slight this study: you leave it altogether to the public Teachers of our Religion. And what is the result? That you are as much unacquainted with the Constitution, as indifferent to the Author, and as regardless of the Means, of your *highest Felicity*, as the profanum vulgus! Could Solomon's fool act a more contemptible part, when he was "scattering firebrands, arrows, and death, and thought it sport?"

Were you better informed in that Science, which is the brightest ornament, and adds the greatest dignity, to the human Intellect, you would know, that nothing ought to be accounted the Happiness of an Immortal, but that, which is perfective of his Nature; but that, which accords with his Reason, in its highest state of improvement; but that, which is consonant with the purest Virtue; but that, which is superior to all sublunary Enjoyments; but that, which is as eternal, as his Existence: which is *therefore* repre-

sented to us, in the sacred Oracles, by a moral Union with the inexhaustible Fountain of all Truth, Excellence, and Good; an union of Mind, Will, and Affection. Nor can I devise a more comprehensive definition of *Religion* itself, in fewer words than these *.

* Illis ergo amotis quæ Felicitatem mentiantur—statuimus finem ultimum hominis esse summam et perpetuam Beatitudinem. Hanc vero beatitudinem constare UNIONE CUM DEO. Per hanc unionem Creatura rationalis formaliter beata est. Johan. xvii. 11, 21 — 23. Atque ob id ipsum *Religio* hoc nomen sortita est; quia docet quâ ratione homo, a Deo per peccatum separatus, possit *religari*, et *reconciliari*.

Qualis igitur sit hæc UNIO, et in quo posita est? Duæ sunt animæ rationalis facultates, *Intellectus* et *Voluntas*: illa, quæ cognoscit *verum*; hæc, quæ appetit *bonum*. Illius perfectio est Veri cognitio; hujus, amor Boni, et ejus adeptio. Per intellectum, docti et sapientes—per voluntatem, boni et justi, perhibemur. Utrâque facultate necesse est anima beata adhæreat, et *uniatur* cum Deo, non modo *cognitione*, sed etiam *amore*.

Hoc ergo stet inconcussum, gemino vinculo animam beatam Deo uniri; *Intellectione*, et *Amore*. Sancti enim non uniuntur Deo sola intellectione: anima beata Deum amore apprehendit, et ad eum tota contentione sic fertur ut in eo acquiescat, et eo fruatur.

Here again, the most contemplative and exalted Characters among us are struck with astonishment, to observe, that the ideas, more usually entertained by mankind on this subject, are such, as effectually operate against the possibility of their Happiness. For, they treat Religion, not as its only infallible Source—but, as its gloomy Impediment. They will not even allow it a fair trial. But, must there not be something strangely perverse, not to call it depraved, in the human conduct, that they can be induced to search for it in *every* way *but that*, in which there is even a chance of finding it? For, I am contending, that Religion and Happiness are convertible terms—and, in fact, one and the same thing.

In making this affirmation, however, it will be recollected, that I intend not, by Happiness, that which is centered either in the eminence, the riches, the splendour, the pleasures, the friendships, or any other

transitory enjoyments, of this fading scene; nor, by Religion, that poor, equivocal, lifeless thing, which is so denominated by the ignorant, and the thoughtless; but, a Happiness, and a Religion, which Heaven will approve, and an Eternity will consummate. There is indeed only one direction, in which all our Undertakings can succeed—all our Designs be accomplished—all our Wishes gratified—and our utmost Desires be eventually fulfilled; and that is, when they are under the entire controul of the Word and Will of God. To imagine, that any thing else is true Piety, and Peace, is to amuse ourselves with our own illusory dreams*.

* "In all acts, which we conceive to be pleasing, or displeasing to God, we derive the reason of their being so from the consideration of their agreeableness or opposition to *his Will:* and, we derive the knowledge of *that Will,* from nothing, but the manifestation, he has made of it in his *Word.* So that, after all, we have no Measure of good or evil, but *the Will of God.* And thus all moral obligation is ultimately referred to the Will of God; which seems to be the only sure and adequate Foundation of it. This is Virtue: and the necessary Associate of Virtue, is, Happiness." Matt. vi. 9, 10.

Let not the uncandid and illiberal infer from hence, that it enters at all into our plan to lessen, or to damp, the few satisfactions we may snatch, as we pass through life; or, to paint it, as if it were strawed all over with thorns. It is true indeed, that, Job xiv. 1, 2; and all human Happiness is never unalloyed—is perpetually interrupted—is, at the best, like a Tale that is told—and, however diversified, is little more than a pleasing idea, *The shadow of bliss.*

It has been granted, and, let it be for ever acknowledged, in adoring celebration of the divine Beneficence, that all the stores and beauties of universal Nature administer to us their numberless delights. But, are not the channels of his Bounty either poisoned by the corruption of our hearts, or stopped in their benign current, by the injustice, the selfishness, the pride, the cruelty, and the oppression, of his creatures? The earth is full of his Goodness;

nor less so, of the depravity of its unworthy objects*.

Take then the Sum total of all sublunary satisfactions, and pleasures—the pleasures of distinction, and opulence, the pleasures of sense and voluptuousness, the pleasures of retirement and serenity, the pleasures of thought, and intellect, the pleasures of taste, and learning; let them be exalted to the highest pitch, of which they are in reality capable; and, if unaccompanied with the riches of *Grace*, the treasures of *Faith*, and the blessings of *Salvation*, I call upon the unseduced impartial *Reason* of any man, to prove that they are not

* Is not this incontestibly evident, from the use, or rather, the general abuse, of the various *Talents* committed to their trust; such as Wealth, Power, Influence, and mental Endowments? which, with very few Exceptions, are universally misapplied to every *personal*, *selfish* gratification—instead of being *principally* devoted to the Glory of God—to the success of true Religion—and to the supreme Happiness of mankind. The parable of the Talents is very little attended to in this view. Matt. xxv. 14——30.

all of them, in the final issue of things, "vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit*."

We have some ingenious Writers, whose abilities we know how to appreciate, and who, in their elaborate disquisitions on our Thesis, have very strongly urged the doctrine of *Self-government* †, as a

* Let those, who have leisure for such inviting studies, pursue this doctrine of *Pleasure*, through all its earthly Sources; as they arise out of the wonders of the natural world—from the numerous works of Art—or, from the human Sciences—leaving out, what we state to be the true Happiness, or chief Good, of Man; and will they not be compelled to say, in the long run, "All this availeth me *nothing?* Our appeal here is to Reason, Observation, Experience." See Woolaston's delineation of human Life, in his Religion of Nature.

† In the great concern of *Education*, the first exercise of christian Benevolence, which must take the precedency of all other, is, to instruct children in the Art of Self-government; or, the proper method of governing their Thoughts—their Senses—their Imagination—their Appetites—and their Passions: together with the great advantages arising from such habitual restraint. And indeed, the most simple, direct, and efficacious, not to say the only Remedy for all those false ideas, and erroneous

primary moral Source of all human Happiness. To this we have no objection, allowing us only the licence of attaching our own ideas to that comprehensive term. In so doing, we must be permitted to say, that Self-government is the government of the *Understanding*, by the dictates of right Reason: and right Reason, being an emanation, or efflux, from the supreme and infinite Reason, will always conduct us to God, as the *Principle*, *Center*, and *End*, of Happiness.

We must be suffered to add, that Self-government is the government of the *Will*, by the principles of true Virtue; or, those principles, which are constitutive of the

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impressions, to which we are liable from the injudicious modes of early Education, is, to guide every youthful mind to the pure Word of God, and to labour this great point—that, We are all of us required, as we shall answer it to God, the Judge of all, to search the Scriptures for ourselves, with seriousness, diligence, and prayer. Nothing should be inculcated on the Minds of youth with such continued ardour, as this sentiment.

intrinsic beauty, worth, and excellence, of the Soul *.

To all this, it must be granted us to subjoin, that Self-government is the government of the universal tenor of the *Life*, by the Canons of christian Morality. In proportion as the whole Man is thus regulated, he may be called *happy*—without any perversion of language, abuse of words, or self-deception.

In another view of the same thing, Truth, right Reason, Virtue, Philosophy, Faith, Grace, when *properly* explained, are so many different denominations of Happiness; for, they are each and all of them

* There certainly is a simplicity of manner, divested of all scholastic and philosophic terms in which mankind may be taught, that all true virtue depends materially on the inward sense of the Mind; that it must flow from the sentiments of the Heart; and that, those sentiments, and that sense, should be formed, not on bare appearances, or mechanical imitations, as they follow each other in a regular track, but, on a judgment of the real worth of the Objects, with which our Excellence and Happiness are connected.

essentially connected with the summum Bonum of every human Being: upon which account, by the way, they ought to be stated with such simplicity, as to be comprehensible by *every* capacity *.

* It cannot have passed unnoticed, by those, who have investigated the character and operation of *universal Benevolence*, that, it can hardly consist with that style of writing on these great points which is always trembling for its fate at the tribunal of severe Criticism. Happiness, Religion, Truth, and Grace, are matters of equal concern to all: and their discussion, unless when professedly addressed to the learned, and philosophical, should descend, as much as possible, to every apprehension. If any neglect be shewn, it certainly should not be to the *lower* classes of the community. I have perhaps made a fruitless attempt, in this offering at the shrine of Truth, not to be despicable to superior, and yet, for the more part, to be perfectly intelligible to inferior, Minds.

We are not insensible to the fascinations of Style; we have often *felt* their force; and how much more likely we are to be borne away by an *eloquent* Sophist, such as Rousseau—or by a *brilliant* Infidel, such as Voltaire—than by a homely Advocate for the most sublime principles. But, in our best and wisest Judgment, we despise such ingenious tricks, and are sure, that, Simplex et nuda Veritas est luculentior: quia satis ornata per se est: adeoque ornamentis extrinsecus additis fucata corrumpitur. Mendacium vero specie placet aliena.

Having neither the Gift, nor the Inclination, to address

What, for example, is Truth—but, the representation of Happiness, *as it is?*—And what is right Reason—but the clear perception, or knowledge, of Happiness, according to its real nature, and just proportions?—What is Philosophy—but the love of that Wisdom, by which true Happiness is understood, and pursued?—What is Virtue—but that Happiness experienced, and enjoyed?—What is Morality—but a character and conduct agreeable to such Happiness?—What indeed is Religion itself—but the cheerful and habitual performance of the various obligations we are under to that Being, who is the great Original, and ultimate End, of all this Happiness?—And what is Faith—but the adherence of the mind and heart to that Object, through whom this Hap-

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the Fancy or the Passions, our business runs in a straightforward line. "In strict reasoning nothing is required, but to lay steps in a due order, firmly connected, and exprest properly, without any flourish; and to arrive at Truth by the *shortest* and *clearest* gradation we are able."

piness is communicated? Therefore styled, "the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ."—In fine, what is Grace—but that supernatural, unmerited, and efficacious Influence, by which, we are enabled to discern the truth of Happiness—become possessed of it—are preserved and secured in the enjoyment of it—until we arrive at the full, perfect, and eternal consummation of it, in the mansions of celestial Bliss *.

This, if I mistake not, is a sufficient, though but a faint Sketch of all that war-

* Right Reason, and Truth, never fail to ascribe all this to a divine Agency. It would be a virtual rejection of the great first Cause—it would be utterly repugnant to the spirit of Humility—it would be worse than heathenish—to do otherwise. Οτι αν αγαθον πραΐτης εις Θεον αναπεμπε· "When you do any good thing, ascribe it to God," was a saying of *Bias*.—The Gods are said to help men, according to Plutarch, της ψυχης το πρακτικον και προαιρετικον αρχαις τισι εγειροντες· "by exciting the powers and faculties of the Soul by certain principles."—Cum Diis gratias agimus, tum nihil nostræ laudi assumptum arbitramur.

ranted Happiness, which will supply us with light in darkness; strength, in weakness; fortitude, in affliction; solace, in suffering; patience, in trial; amidst all the multiplied and varied sorrows of this mortal life: and inspire us with a Peace, a Hope, and a Joy, which surpass all adequate description.

For the sake of impressing these sentiments more deeply on the mind, I will expose myself to the charge of repetition—by a retrospective glance at the preceding pages; and, I will venture myself upon the candid indulgence of the Critic, while I ask——

What is the nature, use, and benefit, of *Theology*, or, the christian Revelation?

To instruct us how to glorify God, in such a manner, as the most effectually to promote our own Excellence, and to ensure our own Happiness *.

* " One great peculiarity of this *sacred Study*, is, that however its Principles may be learned in a scientific or

What is the true idea of *Salvation?*

The chief Good, or supreme Felicity, of Man.

What is the benevolent and merciful design of the divine *Grace*, in its operations on the human mind and heart?

To incline us effectually to pursue that Good, in the way that God has instituted.

What is the principal value of *Faith?*

Actually to receive this Salvation, and to enjoy that Felicity.

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speculative way—yet, the *Heart* is its proper seat: and there is always a certain kind of sweetness, power, and glory, in its truths—perceived only where the Conscience is instructed in them by the Spirit of God: partly in the same way, as a Tutor points out the beauties of an Author to his Pupil, and that Pupil relishes them, in proportion as he possesses *the same spirit* to read, with which they were written."—Thus, we say that a Man is Ciceronian, Horatian, Miltonic—when he has a *Taste* formed to enter into the Spirit of those Writers. And he only is, in truth, christian, who is possessed of such a Taste as imbibes *the Spirit* of his Religion.

What is it, that capacitates us for the enjoyment of such a kind of Happiness?

The *new Creation.*

Why is this blessedness to be derived from a moral, spiritual, or vital *Union to Christ?*

Because, it is the sovereign appointment of Heaven. And, shall we presume to decide upon the fitness, or otherwise, of that specific Mode, by our principles of Reason and Philosophy *?

Stranger, though I am, to the Reader, and, likely as we are, to continue so, I

* The peculiar ideas of Happiness, we are here urging—however uncongenial they may be with the general sentiment, taste, or pursuits of mankind—must, in the very face of them shew, that they belong to the highest order: because, they have no dependence on the contingencies, and casualties, of time, place, or circumstance; or, upon what is only attainable by very few—the riches, the honours, the friendships and connections, which constitute the good of this World. They can even exist without any auxiliary support from the luxurious gratifications of sense—domestic felicity—intellectual pleasures—or, the refinements of elegant life, and manners.

feel myself authorized, by a motive, I need not be ashamed to avow, to offer him one hint of advice—which would not disgrace either the purest or the most generous Friendship. It may sound rather novel, in these times, and in this place: but, no matter. Is it worth attention *? Cordially desirous, that he should partake of all the Happiness, I have been painting—it is true, not in very glowing colours—let me recommend it to him, to retire, for a moment, from all the dizzy and distracting scenes of this world; let him

* The object of true Benevolence, is, *Man*—surveyed and considered in the whole of his Constitution, and the whole of his Existence: as liable to numberless Wants, and Inconveniencies, in his present State; and, as capable of an eternity of Good in another. Those, who have a generous regard to the former, deserve well of their Species; and, do they deserve *less*, who shew an equal solicitude for the latter? Is this irrational, absurd, extravagant? What then is *Christianity?* Upon the sublime principles of this System, piety, virtue, and the kind of benevolence, to which I now refer, are inseparable. Some of us, who deem ourselves very far from deficient in this amiable particular, might perhaps take a short and useful Lecture on the subject, from Luke xvi. 27, 28. Jam. v. 19, 20.

enter into his closet; and there, let him present to the divine Majesty one of the richest prayers, that ever was comprised in the fewest words. He may present it every returning day, if he please, without any burden to his memory, or interruption to his lawful pursuits. It may be found in,

Ps. cvi. 4, 5.

Let me not be accounted an Enthusiast, if, in these evil days of scepticism, and infidelity, I attach to this compendious specimen of pure devotion a short paraphrase, according to the genius and spirit of Christianity: "O Thou great Shepherd of the sheep," who, "through the blood of the everlasting Covenant," hast redeemed lost mankind, seek me; carry me; save me, by thy Grace! Thou, who hast sacrificed thyself for their Salvation, shed abroad in my heart the divine unction of thy Spirit, that I may consecrate and offer up myself a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto God. Feed

me with thy Word, thy Truth, thy Mysteries, thy Body, and thy Blood. Render me attentive, docile, and obedient, to thy Voice. Present my prayers, my desires, my endeavours, and all my religious services, with acceptance to thy Father, through thine own Intercession. Enlighten, guide, and support my every step, in the way to thy heavenly kingdom. Uphold me, lest I fall; and restore me, when fallen. Let me be filled with all joy and peace in believing in Thee; and so bless me with thy unfailing Mercy, Strength, and Succour, that I may walk humbly, steadily, and courageously, in all thy righteous paths, till Thou hast conducted me safely into thy eternal pastures of unimaginable purity, peace, and love!*" Revel. vii. 9——17.

* There are two small Manuals of Devotion, by bishop Andrews, and bishop Ken, very portable, and admirably calculated to promote an habitual practice of pious ejaculation. Something of this sort should be printed in a good type, and *freely* dispersed, by one of our large Societies for promoting national Religion.

" Are these the Pleasures in Religion's paths—
" Blest paths of safety—to be *only* found?
" And will deluded Man, perverse of heart,
" Self-cruel, on the World's infested wilds
" Risk, for vain toys, the jewel of his Soul?
" Yes—Man, fool Man! here buries all his thoughts;
" Inters celestial hopes without one sigh!
" Pris'ner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,
" Here pinions all his wishes: wing'd by Heav'n
" To fly at infinite; and reach it there,
" Where Seraphs gather immortality
" On Life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.
" And is it in the flight of threescore years
" To push Eternity from human thought,
" And smother Souls immortal in the dust?
" A Soul immortal, spending all her fires,
" Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness—
" Thrown into tumult, raptur'd or alarm'd,
" At aught this Scene can threaten, or indulge,
" Resembles Ocean into tempest hurl'd
" To waft a Feather, or to drown a Fly.
" Beware what earth calls *Happiness:* beware
" All joys, but joys that never can expire.
" Who builds on less than an immortal base,
" Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.
" There's nothing here, but what as nothing weighs;

The Poor cannot afford to make any purchase in *these* times—in which the absolute necessaries of existence are scarcely within their reach!

" The more our joy, the more we know it vain;
" And by success are tutor'd to despair.
" Nor is it only thus—but, must be so.
" Who knows not this, though grey, is still a Child.
" Loose then from earth, the grasp of fond desire—
" Weigh anchor—and, *some happier Clime explore.*"

ASSERTION 6.

GOOD WORKS ARE EVIDENTIAL OF OUR BEING IN A STATE OF GRACE, AND SALVATION*.

" No WORKS shall find acceptance in that Day,
" When all disguises shall be rent away,
" That square not truly with *the Scripture Plan*,
" Nor spring from *Love* to God, and *Love* to Man.
" Such as our *Motive* is, our Aim must be;
" If this be servile, that can ne'er be free:
" If Self employ us, whatso'er is wrought
" We glorify that *Self*—not Him we ought.
" Such Virtues had need prove their own reward;
" The Judge of all men owes them no regard.
" The Soul, whose sight all-quick'ning GRACE renews,
" Takes the Resemblance of the good she views;
" As Diamonds, stript of their opaque disguise,
" Reflect the noon-day glory of the Skies.—
" Stand now—and *judge thyself*."

Officii nostri pars est, ut *studeamus vocationem* et *electionem nostram firmam facere*; 2 Pet. i. 10. id est, operam demus, ut evidentibus indiciis de illo Dei erga nos amore persuasi simus. Itaque ex conscientia Virtutum christianarum oritur in hominibus piis certioratio suæ electionis et vocationis: suntque Virtutes istæ, uti eleganter Bernardus loquitur in lib. de Gratia, et Arbitrio libero, Spei quædam seminaria, Charitatis incentiva, occultæ prædestinationis Indicia, futuræ Felicitatis præsagia.

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* As the most perplexing, fundamental, and fatal mistakes are found to originate in our not having proper,

TRUE Religion, as embracing in its very nature all the grand Principles of right Reason, sacred Philosophy, christian Virtue, and sound Morals, has usually been comprehended under the several distinctions, of, *doctrinal*—*experimental*—and *practical*. No distinctions can be more accurate, or useful. Where either of these is not clearly understood, there must be some essential deficiency: and, though Method may be rejected, as formal and obsolete, in this age of effeminate refine-

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that is, christian views of the Nature, Cause, Use, and Place, of *good Works*—as they are all stated in the sacred Volume—the candid Enquirer will be the more attentive to the present *Assertion*, on that account: for, we must maintain, that there is no real discordance in the holy Scripture on this subject—though it has been the unhappy occasion of much injurious controversy. Notwithstanding which, "the collateral motion of the two eyes, the unisons of musick, or any of the harmonies in nature, cannot be more exact, or inseparable, than those which prevail in the written WORD OF GOD:" and if there be any virtue in moral solicitude, it can hardly be displayed on an occasion more laudable, than in vindicating the perfect consistency of sacred Truth.

ment, to omit it, is, in this case, an unpardonable cruelty to the more illiterate part of Society: and, they certainly constitute *the Many*.

Under the general idea of *doctrinal Religion*, are included all those Articles of Faith, which our philosophic Infidels, and, I blush to add, some, who profess Christianity, have dared to call *speculative Notions*; though they form the very Basis of Revelation, and are interwoven in its vital constitution. Detach them—and you leave it a mere *Caput mortuum*—a Body, without a Soul*.

Radicated in this conviction, to me it appears, that the Cause of Christianity

* To say nothing of the impiety of this transaction, it betrays an equal want of sound Sense, right Judgment, and moral Integrity. You might as well detach *the Principia*, from the Newtonian philosophy; the Diagrams, from Euclid's Geometry; the Definitions, and distinct Ideas, from Locke's Essay on the human Understanding; or, the four Elements, from the Composition of the material World. Who does not perceive this, but those, who *will not* see? And, there are none *so blind*.

has suffered no greater injury from its avowed enemies, than it has from those treacherous friends, who, under the too frequent and specious pretence of Zeal for the Practice of piety, have thrown aside *the peculiar Principles*, by which the Wisdom of heaven has thought fit to *distinguish* that divine System. What is this—but to tear up the Root, in order to secure the Tree; to destroy the Foundation, in order to preserve the Superstructure*?

In every System, as well as in mathematical Science, it is acknowledged, by

* "Here then human Candour is a thing of nought. Either, *we are of the Truth*—or, *we are not*. If we *are*, we need no man's candour to secure our felicity: if we are *not*, it can profit us nothing. For, "God is Judge himself;" and, his "judgment is always *according to Truth*:" and by that, we must stand, or fall, for ever. For this reason, it is safe to aver, that, if a man does not *know* and *worship* the divine Being according to the doctrine and design of revealed Religion, he is an utter stranger to all that deserves the name of *religious* worship and knowledge." For, all true and acceptable Religion must include in it a *right* understanding of its *Object*, *Rule*, and *End*.

persons of the most extensive learning, and acute penetration, there must be some primary Data; call them Principles, Axioms, Aphorisms, or by any other term, you prefer*. Through the whole of that System, and in every distinct branch of it, those Principles should be maintained,

* "Before men can reason together, they must agree in *first Principles:* and it is impossible to reason with a man, who has no *Principles* in common with you.—I hold it to be certain, and even demonstrable, that, all knowledge got by reasoning, must be built upon some *first Principles.* This is as certain, as that every house must have a Foundation.—In just reasoning, the strength or weakness of the conclusion will always correspond to that of *the Principles*, on which it is grounded. For, when any System is grounded upon *first Principles*, and deduced regularly from them, we have a thread to lead us through the labyrinth." REID.

Quemadmodum igitur in disciplinis omnibus humanis sunt Principia quædam, unicuique arti et scientiæ propria, ex quibus deducuntur et probantur conclusiones et propositiones omnes, quæ pertinent ad artem et scientiam cujus sunt Principia, ipsa vero in eo genere per se certa sunt, adeoque dici possunt esse veluti regulæ unde pendent; sic quoque res se habet in divina et cœlesti Doctrina. Nam, quum Theoremata, et propositiones ejus ad examen revocantur, et quæritur quod sit eorum *Fundamentum*, necessario deveniendum est ad *Principia* quædam, ultra quæ, in eo saltem genere, procedi non possit.

pure, and entire; that there may be no jarring inconsistency—no contradiction. The harmony of Truth is as interesting, to a Mind finely attuned, as that of sound is, to an ear exquisitely modulated. For, to such a Mind, Truth, is Reason; is Philosophy; is Virtue; is Morals. In nothing then should we be more studious of the utmost correctness, than in representing a System of Verity, and Goodness, which we own to be of celestial Origin: lest, in our Inconsideracy, we obscure the Counsels of the most High—maim the Perfections of Heaven—or, with one Attribute, and Doctrine, another wound *.

* God is Light, we are told: is it possible then, or can you believe, that he has given us a Revelation of Truths, in which the *lucidus Ordo* is not to be found in the most consummate degree? or, has he only favoured us with a confused jumble of intellectual Atoms? Can you mean to assert, or even insinuate, any thing so extremely absurd and contemptible? so totally dissimilar to the proceedings of infinite Wisdom! The sacred Scriptures, you may depend upon it, form an entire System; and in that System, it is the proper exercise of our best Reason to expect all its essentials—such as, connection, agreement, and completeness: which are all founded on

That, is *experimental Religion*—when, in matters of *Grace* and *Truth*, the Understanding is rightly informed, concerning "the things of the Spirit of God;" the Will is excited to embrace them, as our chief Good; the Affections are supremely engaged to them; the Imagination is delighted with them; and the habitual tenor of the whole Life is cast into the Mould of them: and, what is that Reason, or that Philosophy, which can be justified in pronouncing such a Religion to be nothing more than the Dreams and Visions of a wild Enthusiast*?

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axioms, definitions, and deductions. The most diligent care should be used, that there be no mistake or error in the first Principles we adopt: for, in that case, the whole System must be erroneous: happily, as a most cautious and correct Philosopher has observed, "to judge of these first Principles, requires no more than a sound mind free from prejudice, and a distinct conception of the question. The learned and the unlearned, the Philosopher, and the Labourer, are upon a level, and will pass the same judgment, when they are not misled by some bias, or taught to renounce their understanding from some mistaken religious principle."

* How many are there, who would be thought to culti-

Admitting, however, that all these things should prove only the mystic amusements of a pious Fancy, I contend, that nothing, but a Mind lost to the noblest elevations of the human Soul, and vitiated by gross infidelity, would ever labour to diminish their value; much less to treat them with ridicule, and contempt. If there ever be

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vate a calm, impartial, and liberal Mind, but who lose all their candour, philosophy, and patience, the moment we start the subject of *experimental Religion!* But, why all this rage against an experimental Sense of divine things? and, supposing it could not be rationally explained—what then? Is not *personal identity* quite as inexplicable? and, should it be allowed to consist in *Consciousness*, "That," says a Philosopher of the first class, "is an operation of the Understanding of its own kind, and cannot be logically defined. The objects of it are our present pains, our pleasures, our hopes, our fears, our desires, our doubts, our thoughts; in a word, all the passions, and all the actions of our mind. When a man is conscious of pain, or pleasure, he is certain of its existence; when he is conscious, that he hopes or fears, he is certain of the reality of these operations."—What then do we mean by experimental Religion, but the *Consciousness* we have of our various hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, desires and operations of mind, with respect to that particular subject? Is there any thing absurd, frantic, irrational, or extravagant, in all this?

a moment, in which laughter is out of season, and mirth is madness, it is, when they are so egregiously misapplied. This is, emphatically, "The sport of Fools."

But, by philosophic and reflecting Intellects, imbued with religious Principles, it will be perfectly understood, when we remark, that, experimental Piety is a kind of *spiritual Sensation:* by which, the internal Senses, or Organs of Science, and Sentiment, are exercised, and affected *. For

* Is it possible, that St. Paul can allude to any other *Senses*, in his memorable address to the christian Hebrews? v. 12——14. There are, you perceive, *first Principles* in the Oracles of God; Στοιχεια, Elements, Rudiments of Christianity.—But, there is also a *Skilfulness* in divine things: an improving ability and readiness to discern their use, and worth, and glory; by an increasing knowledge of them in the Mind, and a deeper impression of them in the Heart: by a greater Dexterity, as it were, in arranging the Doctrines, in applying the Promises, and in obeying the Precepts, of the Gospel. But, so long as people neglect *the study* of the Scriptures, they must necessarily remain απειρος, imperitus, "*unskilful* in the Word of righteousness:" they must continue ignorant of the Righteousness of God—of the Righteousness, by which alone they can be justified in his sight—and of the Right-

example; there is a spiritual *Sight* of divine things; as when the "Eyes of the Understanding are said to be enlightened," to perceive "the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ:" there is a spiritual *Relish*; as when we are said to "taste that the Lord is gracious:" there is a spiritual *Smell*; as when the Name of the Lord is spoken of as "Ointment poured forth:" there is a spiritual *Hearing*; as when we are said to hang upon the Words of eternal life*, and to "know the joyful sound of the Gospel." And, to this, there seems to have been an evident and impressive allusion, in that so often repeated Saying,

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eousness, or true holiness, which is essential to the christian character. While those, who have their spiritual Senses, τα αισθητηρια, in habitual exercise, δια την εξιν γεγυμνασμενα, will be going on to perfection, and will have *an experimental Taste* of the Goodness, the Sweetness, the Excellency, of sacred Truth. Can any thing less than this be virtually implied in Eph. iii. 14——21? No powers of Reason, Learning, or Philosophy can attain to this, we admit: it belongs entirely to the province of *divine Grace*.

* See Luke xix. 48. Εκρεμαμαι, pendeo ab aliquo.

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." There is also a spiritual *Feeling*: as when the same Gospel is not only acknowledged to be the truth, but, felt to be "*the power*, of God to our Salvation."

For any other view of experimental Piety, I am no Advocate: much less, for that heap of unintelligible trash, and jargon, which has been obtruded on the world, by Ignorance, Absurdity, and Self-conceit *.

* We have studied the utmost precision in this concise view of the subject, because, none seems to require greater, nor should any be handled with more cautious delicacy. To these few remarks it may be added, from an original Thinker, that, "The views men have of maxims, drawn from the observations of *others* on human life, have double lustre and extent, when the same persons have been led to similar observations from *their own Experience*. From analogy, therefore, it follows, that persons, who *experience Religion*, should see the propositions in holy Scripture, in a light vastly superior to that of all mere Theorists and Speculators whatever.

"Thus, as none knows the feelings of a Parent, or of a Philosopher, but a Parent and a Philosopher—so, that the *sensations* of a real Christian should be inexplicable to any, but true and very Christians, is a thing perfectly

We come now to the *practical* department of the christian System: which, in our estimate of the subject, must be preceded by a right Judgment of its Doctrines, and an inward Sense of its Power. In other words, expressive of the same thing, there must be Light in the Understanding—Life in the Soul, "the Life of God"—and Love in the Heart—*before* there can be any degree of that evangelical Righteousness, and true Holiness in the Conduct,

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consonant to the constitution of nature. It is not therefore enthusiasm, or absurdity, but a sober truth, to say, that the life of a christian is *an hidden life*—of a-piece, in its kind, with the life of a Parent, in his parentiality, or of the Philosopher, in his philosophy."

Let those, who dispute the operations of special Grace upon the human Soul, and ridicule those spiritual Sensations, explain, how, *without them*, we can possibly understand, Rom. viii. 1——26. Human Reason and Philosophy, it will be said, reject all this as unintelligible nonsense.—Unintelligible to *them*. So much the worse. The illustrious Pascal often acknowledged with gratitude, that, among the many obligations he owed his Father, none were more valuable than the care he had taken to inculcate this maxim; "Whatever is an object of *Faith* cannot be an object of *Reason*—much less be in subjection to it."

by which the christian Character is exemplified. We must be "the Workmanship of God—created in Christ Jesus, *unto* good Works." To this our great Prophet might refer, when he said, "A good Man—out of the good Treasure, that is in his Heart—*bringeth forth* that which is good."—This is the Order: and it deserves the utmost attention.

SECTION XI.

What then is the peculiar Nature of those good Works, which are evidential of our Grace, and Salvation ?*

* To a Mind, accustomed to consider the holy Scriptures as the final Rule of judgment, and to weigh things in that Balance, it is extremely afflicting, to observe, what wilful mistakes are entertained on this subject; how little it is investigated by persons, who are totally ignorant of what the Scriptures mean, both by the practice of piety, and the exercise of good works. Countless are the instances of those, who, in this state of shameful ignorance, "appear outwardly righteous unto men," and are destitute of every thing, that can render them so *before God*. It would be a great point gained, could we excite a little of that Self-suspicion, which might lead to more accurate enquiry: could we prevail on those, who seem to

The *Works* here implied, though not specifically recited, are all such, as stand in opposition to every thing, that is evil—whether vicious, immoral, or profane; whether prohibited by the first, or by the second Table of the divine Law; whether dishonourable to God, injurious to Man, or prejudicial to our own Excellence, and Peace: such are all "the Works of the Flesh," and all the Instigations of the Devil; which are sufficiently manifest without any precise enumeration: and indeed, the most effectual Method of suppressing them, is, to recommend and establish their reverse: the very best Mode, of avoiding that which is evil, is, to "cleave to that which is good."

But, what are those "*good Works*," which flow out of this new Creation, and

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think much more highly of their *imaginary* goodness, than of the divine Grace, to scrutinize the *Matter*, and the *Manner*, the *Principle*, and the *End*, of their moral and religious actions: otherwise, when their true nature comes to be examined, at another Bar, they may be found devoid of all real excellence. Matt. xxiii. 25——28.

which, in their proper place, can never be too warmly enforced? and what are the characteristic Tempers, or Graces, from whence they necessarily result—without which, they would be accounted no better than "dead Works," according to the judgment of God; the splendid tinsel of some base counterfeit. We shall meet with a succinct account, a rich cluster, of these "Fruits of the Spirit," in two comprehensive passages of inspired Writ, to which you may easily advert, in Gal. v. 19——25; and, 2 Pet. i. 1——8 *.

This Catalogue of christian Excellencies might have been enlarged to a great extent: but, as those few must virtually include all the rest, it is superfluous: only let it be remembered, that they close with a recommendation of that CHARITY, which

* Let a Man prove his own heart and character by this Test, and it may serve at least to convince him, that the spirit and practice of our Religion are not the easy thing, which the many *Triflers*, who assume the christian Name, most unhappily for themselves conceive it to be.

rises, in some degree of dignified superiority, *above* every christian Virtue. And why? Because, it involves in it almost every other. For, after having examined it with critical inquisition, will you not own, that it is patient, forbearing, sympathetic, benevolent, gentle, considerate, condescending, public-spirited—in short, what is it not, that is amiable, sublime, god-like? Consult the strain, in which it is so highly, and so justly celebrated, in 1 Cor. xiii *. A Chapter, which can

* How far this essential excellence of the christian Character is in any measure exhibited in the temper and manners of those, who acknowledge its necessity, may deserve great consideration. We hear much of Charity to the poor—and much again of a certain equivocal something called universal Charity, which can sacrifice both *Truth*, and *Good*, to an unmeaning Candour. But, where is the Charity, which contains those no less than *fifteen* moral qualities, by which St. Paul has distinguished it? Where is the Charity, " which rejoiceth in the Truth?" in that truth, for the defence of which, he was both " a burning and a shining light—a living and a dying Martyr." The amiable Fenelon was, I believe, perfectly correct, when he said, " All sincere Virtues have for their *Principle*, and *End*, the supreme Truth—which is God himself. Nothing is holy and just, but what is exactly agree-

scarcely be sufficiently admired: and, had we no other weapon, with which to com-

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able to Truth, and can bear the light and test of it. Nothing is solid in argument, but what is true; nothing in nature is excellent or noble, but what is true; and nothing is virtuous in religion, but what is of the same stamp."—There is scarce any counterfeit more current among men, than a false idea of christian Charity—though the Touchstone is always at hand, and though, to be deceived, is fatal. How strange! that, in the highest of all concerns, mankind should chuse to impose upon their own understanding, and prefer darkness to light. We have seen this, in persons of superior intellect, and endowments!

After all—how many are there, who seem to value themselves on their Liberality, Candour, and Compassion, and yet need reminding, that the greatest exercise of Charity, is that, which is shewn to *the Souls* of the poor, the friendless, and the ignorant! This indeed is a ray from the great Center of *enlightening Grace.*

" Here stay thy foot—how copious and how clear
" Th' o'erflowing well of Charity springs here!
" Hark! 'tis the Musick of a thousand rills—
" Some through the groves, some down the sloping hills,
" Winding a secret, or an open course,
" And all supplied from an eternal Source.
" The ties of nature do but feebly bind—
" And Commerce partially restrains mankind—
" Philosophy without this heav'nly Guide
" May blow up self-conceit and nourish pride;

bat that hideous monster, that subtle serpent, Infidelity, this alone would be more than adequate to all its malignant attacks on "The Oracles of God."

Not to digress, however, from the topic immediately before us. About the moral necessity of "good Works," it may be presumed, there can be no controversy. If there were, it would be a wretched waste of time, to dispute with those, who could make it a question: nor am I inclined to think, that such Characters exist—unless indeed they are insane. A different opinion would really be uncharitable. Not but what there are others, worse than deranged, who, shocking to know, have contended, that these Works are conditional recommendations to the Favour, and Glory of God, and, to use

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"But, while her province is the reas'ning part,
"Throws still a veil of midnight o'er the heart:
"'Tis *Truth divine* exhibited on earth
"Gives Charity her being, and her birth."

their own shameful, may I not add, anti-christian dialect, that "they *entitle* us to eternal Salvation* !"

This we deny, *toto cælo*, without either qualification, or apology. Neither Persons nor Learning weigh any thing with

* "Some lead a life they blameless deem, and just;
"Their own dear Virtue their unshaken trust.
"They never sin—or if, as all offend,
"Some trivial slips their daily walk attend,
"The poor are near at hand, the charge is small—
"A slight gratuity atones for all!
"That Plea refuted, other Quirks they seek—
"Mercy is infinite, and Man is weak;
"The future shall obliterate the past—
"And Heav'n, no doubt, shall be their home at last!
"Thus various foes against *the Truth* combine;
"Though Pride opposes *most* her chief design:
"Pride—of a growth superior to the rest;
"The subtlest Serpent with the loftiest crest."

Christian benevolence cannot but be anxious, that those, who are caressing such a Serpent, may be induced by these remarks, whether in verse or prose, to look into Isaiah ii. 10——17.—Job xxii. 2——5.—xxv. 4——6.—xxxv. 5——8.—Luke xviii. 10——14.

How these passages can consist, but with the deepest humility of heart, and self-abasement before God, let the impartial Reader determine.

us, where Truth is to be the Victim. "Let GOD be true, and every man a Liar"—who has the blasphemous arrogance to contradict him. We therefore resist the idea, with all the fervour of indignation *. Not from any undue partiality to a favourite sentiment; but, from a full per-

* We are aware that this may be called petulance, vanity, and conceit. But, is there not a righteous Anger, both commended and commanded in the sacred Writings? and is there any occasion, upon which it can be exerted with greater propriety, than in the cause of God and Truth—and in repressing that Pride and Insolence of man, which is an Abomination in his sight? For, upon no other principle could we suffer the idea of *entitling* ourselves, by any terms or conditions, to the divine Favour and Glory, to gain admission into our thoughts. The moment it was started, it would be rejected with disgust.

Hanc fastuosam doctrinam Scriptura diffiat, quotiescunque docet nos omnes in multis labi; et salutem aut vitam æternam *Donum* Dei vocat. Neque tantùm donum, sed et Χαρισμα, id est, donum *gratuitum*. Rom. vi. 23. . . 2 Tim. i. 9. Quocirca idem Apostolus, cum agitur de causâ vel pretio salutis, solet *opponere* gratiam operibus, ut res quæ simul stare non possunt. Rom. iv. 4. . . . xi. 6. Benignè nobiscum agitur, si Deus ignoscit nostris bonis operibus, et in bona opera nostra non inquirit ex rigore justitiæ. Ps. cxxx. 3. . . . cxliii. 2.

suasion, that the sacred Writings direct us to look upon it as nothing less than a presumptuous opposition to *the Truth*, *the Honour*, and *the Grace*, of God. We cannot even imagine a greater insult to his divine Majesty: and, if it attach to a public Teacher of his Religion, we have no language to express the horror, which it ought to inspire into the minds of those, who are jealous of his Glory.

But, the impious absurdity of such an idea will perhaps be more conspicuous, when we have shewn,

SECTION XII.

What it is, that constitutes the Goodness of those Works, which display the christian Character.

Let it be enquired then, wherein their *goodness* consists—as to the Individual, who performs them; or, what is that characteristic Quality, on account of which they are denominated *good* in the sight of God—"who seeth not, as Man seeth;"

neither doth he judge according to the appearance of things; "for, the Lord *searcheth* all *Hearts*, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." This is his high and exclusive Prerogative: and it ought to be very closely applied to our present investigation.

The *Principle* of an action is of the utmost consequence, as to the class, to which it belongs. For, that, which from its external shew may be very fair, and commendable, and greatly celebrated among men, may nevertheless be an abomination before God—when it comes to be analyzed. The *Motive*, from which it proceeds, may be so worthless, and corrupt, as to destroy all its seeming piety, and virtue. Nothing is to be estimated as morally or spiritually good, if the secret Principle, by which we are actuated, is intrinsically otherwise*.

* From what a diversity of *principles* and *motives* do the great multitude attend the same places of religious Wor-

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Notwithstanding the inexpressible importance of this Maxim, in religious

ship: some, from Custom; others, for Amusement; some, from Policy; others, from spiritual Pride—as in the instance of the self-deluded Pharisee, who accompanied the Publican into the Temple of God to pray: and some again, for purposes too infamous to notice: while a Few—alas, how few! resort thither to worship that "God, who is a Spirit, *in spirit*, and *in truth*." In all these, the only essential difference must be in the *Principle*, or *Motive*, of action. So likewise in every thing, that is called *Virtue*, and *Morality*.

Oderunt peccare *Boni* virtutis amore;
Oderunt peccare *Mali* formidine pœnæ.

Non enim pœnæ aut infamiæ metu non esse peccandum, sed justi honestique studio et officio.

The tenth and thirteenth Articles of the national Church affirm, I observe, that, "we have no power to do good Works, pleasant and acceptable to God without the Grace of Christ; and that Works, done before the Grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasing to God." The true reason of which, I apprehend, must be, because they do not proceed from the proper *Principle*, or *Motive:* there is something radically amiss in that quarter. Prov. xxi. 4. . . xv. 8. Is. lxvi. 1——3. . . Matt. vii. 17, 18.——The second Council of *Orange*, held A. D. 529, is very interesting on this point.

"Man's obligations infinite, of course
"His life should prove that he perceives their force;
"The utmost he can render is but small—
"The *Principle*, and *Motive*, all in all."

concerns, there is none more generally disregarded; though, in all the inferior transactions of civil and social Life, it is universally admitted. What, for instance, is the warmest profession of Friendship, when it is discovered to proceed from personal Interest? or, what the most flaming Patriotism, when the prospect of a Peerage, a Pension, or a Place, is found in a single moment to paralyze all its activity for the public Good? In both cases, as soon as ever the imposture is detected, it is abhorred. The infamy of the *Principle*, while it provokes, will justify, the resentment, with which it ought to meet.

Another circumstance, essential to the very being of a good Work, is, the moral rectitude of the *Spirit*, or *Temper*, in which it is performed *. Who does not recollect

* As the Science of Christianity is the most useful, necessary, and sublime of all Studies, the Spirit of Christianity is that, which forms the most, and indeed, the only really excellent of all Characters. What then can be of

the fervent Zeal, by which Jehu was impelled, in executing the will of Heaven against the idolatrous worshippers of Baal? and who will be so unwise, as to forget

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greater importance to any Individual, than clearly to understand by what Spirit he is *habitually governed?* whether by a Spirit of pride, avarice, sensuality, and worldliness; or, by a Spirit of Piety, Devotion, and Grace. Because, *the prevailing Disposition* is what constitutes *the real Character.* No part of the knowledge of ourselves is so requisite, as the knowledge of our *Spirit*—which is the principal part of ourselves. The power of Reflection, or Introversion, is laid in our nature for this very purpose—that we should look *into ourselves:* for, without Self-acquaintance, it is given us in vain.

Should the Reader wish to have a subject, or two, for the best exercise of this intellectual Faculty, in his meditative moments, let him say to his own Spirit, "Do I unfeignedly believe, what God has thought fit to reveal? Do I stedfastly hope, in what he hath so graciously promised? Do I supremely love, what he hath expressly enjoined? For, the whole of our Religion is virtually included in Faith, Hope, and Charity. If we have the *spirit* of these three Graces, all is well: but, wanting that, let us fear. Let a man examine *himself.*" Ει γαρ ψυχη μελλει γνωσεσθαι αυτην, εις ψυχην αυτη βλεπτεον. Το δε γινωσκειν αυτην, ομολογεμεν σωφροσυνην ειναι. It is indeed the most profitable of all sciences, to know τας φυσεις τε και εξεις των ψυχων, the dispositions and habits of the Soul.

the irreligious *Spirit*, of Vanity, and Ostentation, with which it was animated? Who again does not applaud the noble and generous language, in which the apostle Peter avowed his attachment to his Lord, and Master? But, shall we not lament that *Spirit*, of false Confidence, by which it was inspired? The truth is, an Action may wear all the outward semblance of real goodness, as to the mere *Opus operatum*, and yet, when the *Spirit*, or *Temper*, in which it is done, comes to be scrutinized, it may be altogether destitute of christian excellence *. There may

* What apology can we offer for the shameful ignorance of that man, who does not know, that much of our Saviour's doctrine, delivered in his sermon from the Mount, turns upon this? particularly, when he is giving his disciples advice respecting the practical duties of *Prayer*—*Almsgiving*—and *Fasting*. Matt. vi. 1——8. I must therefore take the liberty of stating it as a general Maxim, applicable to all cases of Religion, and Virtue, that, It is not merely the thing done, but the *Principle*, the *Spirit*, the *Manner* of doing it, upon which its intrinsic excellence, or otherwise, depends. Non quid, sed quâ Mente. Almost all our treatises on Morality, are *materially* defective here—to say nothing of our public preaching.

be "a Zeal of God," and for a Religion of our own, "without Knowledge"—without Integrity—without a single spark of divine Grace! How much then does it behove us, to examine well, and often, "what *manner of Spirit* we are of;" and, let us take this along with us, that, the same almighty Power, by which we are "created in Christ Jesus," must "renew *a right Spirit* within us."

If there be any particular Disposition of heart, which of all others is most repugnant to the rectitude of Spirit, for which we now plead, and therefore most offensive to God, it is, that Spirit of Pride, or Self-righteousness, to which we are so strongly propense; and which misleads us to look upon our religious performances, either in the light of comparative Worthiness, partial Recommendations, or conditional Titles, to the Favour, and Glory of God *. Either I have utterly mistaken

* Whatever tendency I might encourage in myself to this *complicated* evil—for, such it really is—is counter-

the true intent, and meaning, of all the Scriptures, or else, I am perfectly on their side, when I affirm, that, nothing, but total and pertinacious Apostacy, can remove us farther from the Religion of Christ, than such a Temper, encouraged,

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acted, not only by an experimental consciousness of my innate depravity, but, by that humiliating appeal, both to my Reason and Religion, which is made in 1 Cor. iv. 7. What then is the language of justice, humility, and gratitude, but that of the Apostle, in Rom. xi. 34——36? What Edition of the Bible do they consult, or with what Eyes of perversion do they read the Word of life and salvation, who would induce us to ascribe the Esse, the Velle, and the Posse, as to every thing that is good, but to the divine Agency, and Grace? It might be deemed charitable, and candid, but it would be *Treachery to God*, and *his Truth*, to suppose, that such persons are under his guidance and tuition, let their Learning, or Morals, be what they may. Rom. x. 1——4. I am perfectly willing to resign for ever all claim to the most common understanding, if this Chapter is not *elaborately* designed to shew us, that, The whole of our Title, both to Justification and Salvation, with all their inclusive blessings, is founded *entirely* upon a Righteousness, which God himself hath provided for us in Christ Jesus, and which is to be received by *Faith alone*.—To disprove this grand Position, a Sophist must be more than usually ingenious in *subtilty*, and *falshood*.

and indulged: and, I am as perfectly convinced, that no Person, and no Work, is at all acceptable to God, till it is cloathed with Humility. I most cordially subscribe to the sententious Saying of an eminent Writer of the last Age—that, "No Man is *any thing* in the sight of God, till he is *nothing* in his own sight *."

* "Perish the Virtue, as it ought, abhorr'd—
"And the Fool with it, who insults his Lord.
"Th' Atonement, a Redeemer's love has brought,
"Is not for you—the righteous need it not.
"Seest thou yon Harlot, wooing all she meets?
"The worn-out Nuisance of the public streets;
"Herself from morn to night, from night to morn,
"Her own abhorrence, and as much your scorn?
"The gracious show'r, *unlimited*, and *free*,
"May fall on her, when Heav'n denies it thee.
"Of all that Wisdom dictates this the drift—
"*That Man is dead in sin—and, life a Gift.*"

There is nothing grates so harshly upon the proud ear of unregenerate human Nature, as this *essential* branch of the christian Doctrine. No powers of Eloquence, or Painting, could ever describe the indignant Emotions, with which it was originally heard by the Self-righteous, whom the Saviour once addressed in this pointed language, Matt. xxi. 28——31.

The only additional circumstance of great weight, as to the quality of good Works, is, the ultimate *End*, to which they are directed. If that End be Self-admiration; if it be, to procure us the Applause of mankind, or earthly Fame; or, if still more impiously, it be, to merit, and provide for us, a seat in the mansions of eternal Bliss; they will meet with no approbation, much less any reward, at the Bar of God, the final Judge of all. For, when they are weighed in his Balance, and "every Man's Work shall be tried, *of what sort* it is," they will be found wanting, and be rejected accordingly *.

On the contrary—should they have been exercised for the purpose of demonstrating

* "The plea of Works, as arrogant, as vain,
"Heav'n turns from with abhorrence and disdain;
"Not more affronted by avow'd neglect,
"Than by the mere Dissembler's feign'd respect.
"What is all Righteousness, that men devise—
"What—but a sordid bargain for the Skies?
"But Christ as soon would abdicate his own,
"As stoop from heaven to sell *the Proud* a throne."

our Gratitude to the God of all Grace, Mercy, and Peace; to shew forth his Praise; to promote the true Happiness of our Kind; and, "that God in all things may be glorified, through Christ Jesus;" though we shall blush for their deficiency, they will certainly be crowned with the accepting smile of Heaven; and, though renounced by us, they will be openly acknowledged by Him, with a "well done, good and faithful Servant*."

* If there be any one thing I can recollect to have heard inculcated from my earliest youth, most especially, it is, that we should follow *the Example* of Christ, and tread in his steps. But, where shall we look for the people, in whom we can trace the lineaments of this most amiable and exalted Character—"who went about doing good, and who charged us to remember, that it is more blessed to give, than it is to receive?" In whom, among his numberless disciples, shall we discover that meekness, that gentleness, that humility, that benevolence, that devotion, that entire separation from the *Maxims*, *the Spirit*, and *the Manners*, of the World, and that persevering Zeal for the truth of Religion? Alas! where shall we see imitated the most striking features of his Conduct? For, "were not the relief of human misery, in all its varieties, and complications of distress, the reformation of the vicious, the instruction of the ignorant, the

These then—and, if I err not, *only these*—are the Works, which have any scriptural claim to the appellation of "good Works*:" and, though they can in no respect atone

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confirmation of the pious, the consolation of the meek, the encouragement of the docile, the reprobation of pharisaic pride, and demure hypocrisy—were not these godlike purposes, as the only means of *true Happiness*, the sole occupation of his Thoughts, the unceasing employment of his Time, and the devoted pursuits of his whole Life?"—To recommend, and to celebrate, such a Model of consummate excellence, deserves no praise: it is an honour to any Talents, to be thus applied. But, where is the Man, whose Heart can attest, that this is the Model he is labouring to copy; and whose Motto really is, Sequar—etsi haud passibus equis?—Ο Θεος, ιλασθητι μοι τω αμαρτωλω!

* Tria enim omninò requirantur ad bonum opus. Primo, ex parte *Principii*—ut fiat corde per Fidem purificato; Acts xv. 9. Hebr. xi. 6. Immundis enim et infidelibus nihil est mundum, sed polluta est eorum Mens, et Conscientia, Tit. i. 15.—Secundo, ex parte *Formæ*, seu *Modi*—ut fiat non solum externo opere, sed præcipuè internâ cordis obedientiâ, Rom. vii. 14. . ii. 28, 29.—Tertio, ex parte *Finis*—ut fiat ad Gloriam Dei; Matt. v. 16. . 1 Cor. x. 31. . 1 Pet. iv. 11. Unde fit, ut res, in se bona quoad externam speciem, mala tamen fiat, et in peccatum convertatur, si non *benè* fiat quoad essentiam, et juxta Dei præscriptum.

for our sins, reconcile us to God, or obtain for us admission to his beatific presence, they are EVIDENTIAL of our being actually in a State of Grace, and Salvation: that we are possessed of "Faith unfeigned;" that we are "created anew in Christ Jesus, after the Image of God;" and, that we are living Branches in the living Vine. They are *evidential* of all this; because, they are the outward and visible Signs, Fruits, or Effects, of the inward and spiritual Grace, from whence they issue into the life and manners. 2 Cor. ix. 8. Phil. i. 9——11 *.

* So that, utterly disclaiming all the common, ignorant, and odious Cant, of "best Endeavours, and self-determining Powers," let us faithfully adhere both to the letter and the spirit of genuine, apostolical Christianity: never forgetting, that all evangelical Righteousness will increase, and multiply, exactly, and only, in proportion to the Grace, and Strength, we are daily receiving out of the Fullness, which is in Christ Jesus. Let us ever be tenacious of its own discriminative *Modes of expression:* for, though some may be so thoughtless, or so absurd, as to judge them immaterial, are they not the Medium through which Ideas are conveyed? and, what is the Foundation of all our established Principles, but the ideas we imbibe? In short, *Words* are *Things.*

Numberless are the authorities, which might be adduced, to establish this point: but, it is so obvious to every attentive Reader of the sacred pages, that I shall satisfy myself with referring to one of the most valuable and comprehensive.

Tit. ii. 11——14*.

" O THOU! whose balance does the mountains weigh;
" Whose Will the vast tumultuous Seas obey;

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* How disingenuous, how unjust, how malignant then, to infer, that those who are the most zealously affected for the glory of divine " GRACE, which bringeth Salvation," are therefore inimical to the promotion of good Works! Let both have their respective *Valuation*, and preserve their proper *Place*, and then, let our Ardour kindle in their service, and rise to its brightest flame. Among other things, let a Nation, boasting, as we are apt to do, of our Philanthropy, public Charities, and the like, take notice, that, to this hour, we are defective in a most material point—which the Legislature might remedy in a moment—in the establishment of *parochial Schools* throughout the Kingdom. By this grand and efficacious Mean, the lowest orders of the Community—and *in fact*, the Bees, which collect the honey, upon which the whole Hive must be subsisted—will no longer be the miserable Drudges of their fellow-creatures, with Minds scarcely elevated in rationality, or education, above the herds they feed, and drive.

" Earth's *meanest Son*, with trembling, prostrate falls,
" And on the boundless of thy MERCY calls!
" Thy Power, my weakness, may I ever see,
" And dedicate myself, my all to Thee!
" O, may my Understanding ever read
" That glorious Volume, which thy Wisdom made *!
" O may I pant for Thee in each desire,
" And with strong FAITH increase the holy fire!
" Stretch out my soul in HOPE, and grasp the Prize,
" Which in eternity's deep bosom lies!
" At the great Day of recompence behold,
" Devoid of fear, thine awful Book unfold!
" Then, wafted upward to thy blissful Seat,
" From age to age my grateful song repeat;
" My Light, my Life, my God, my Saviour see—
" And rival Angels in the praise of THEE!" †

* It certainly is not sufficiently recollected, much less acted upon as a practical principle, that the first and second volume of divine Revelation are " the Word, the Oracles, and *The Wisdom* of GOD:" and that they are only so far really believed, and honoured, as we read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, *in this view*. Ezra vii. 25. . . 1 Cor. ii. 4——7. . . 1 Thess. ii. 13.

† Are not these the natural effusions of every devout Mind? read perhaps with tolerable patience in poetry, but hardly to be licensed, in these apostate times, in prose! We are allowed to be animated and warm in every thing but what constitutes " our supreme Good, and the Greatness of Man?" but in that, without which vain are all pretensions to Greatness, whether of *King*, *Hero*, *Statesman*, or *Philosopher*. But, when should we be animated

and warm, if not when our *Eternity* is at stake? Were our passions given us for nothing? Is it not Heaven, but the reverse, "that is to be taken by violence?" All our Affections are too feeble, all the wings of our Soul are too few, to be put forth, when the divine Favour is the object of our pursuit and ambition: and to be languid in Devotion, is to be solemnly undevout. Devotion is the great Source of all other duties: all the virtues are its progeny: it is at once the Asylum of human frailty—the Support of christian perfection—and the golden Chain of union between heaven and earth, which keeps open the blessed communication." How then can we be too much alive to this ennobling exercise?

"Devotion, when lukewarm is undevout:
"But when it glows, its heat is struck to Heav'n;
"To human hearts her golden harps are strung;
"High heaven's Orchestra chaunts Amen to Man!"

ASSERTION 7.

IT IS THE IRREVERSIBLE ORDINANCE, OR DECREE, OF HEAVEN, THAT THOSE, WHO ARE CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS UNTO GOOD WORKS, SHOULD WALK IN THEM.

" Chains are the portion of revolted Man,
" Stripes, and a Dungeon; and his body serves
" The triple purpose. In that sickly, foul,
" Opprobrious residence, he finds them all.
" Propense his Heart to idols, he is held
" In silly dotage on created things,
" Careless of their Creator.
" GRACE makes the slave a Freeman. 'Tis a change,
" That turns to ridicule the turgid speech
" And stately tone of Moralists, who boast,
" As if, like him of fabulous renown,
" They had indeed ability to smooth
" The shag of savage nature, and were each
" An Orpheus, and omnipotent in song!
" But, Transformation of apostate man
" From fool to wise—from earthly to divine—
" Is work for Him, who made him. He alone,
" And he, by means in philosophic eyes
" Trivial, and worthy of disdain, atchieves
" *The wonder.*"

Quemadmodum non debemus inferre justificationem nostram ex aliquo effectu sanctificationis; ita nec illa ap-

prehensio justificationis est a Deo, quæ hominem abstrahit a mediis et regulis sanctificationis: namque indecorum est non ambulare sanctè secundum verbum Dei. Conditi enim sumus in Christo ad bona opera. Interim Christus unica ad vitam Via est: Sanctimoniæ praxis est necessaria occupatio et operositas eorum, qui hac viâ ambulant.

" Form, if it be possible, a just notion of Christianity. I say, if it be possible. For, we have a wonderful reluctance to understand our own Religion! We have all a strange propensity to disguise the character of *a true Christian.* We have the holy Scriptures, and in them the gospel-plan of Redemption before our eyes every day—and every day we throw over them a variety of prejudices, which suppress *the Truth*, and prevent us from seeing its beauty."

It is very well known, that the most celebrated Writers on natural history have very properly classed the human Species at the head of it. For, though other Animals may have some advantages of Sense superior to Man, it is peculiar to him, to rise to wondrous acquisitions in Arts, and Science: at the summit of which we have been accustomed to place, as the most valuable, the most sublime, and, in our judgment, the most requisite,

The Science of Christianity:

which, it is impossible for us to comprehend in the grand Scale, or as a complete Whole, without a right understanding, and a clear conception, of

The christian State—
The christian Life—
The christian Character *.

* Nothing can be more senseless, or useless, than for public and professional Teachers of our most holy Faith to talk about Religion, and Morals, and Virtue, in a general and equivocal manner—without characterizing their true Nature, upon the genuine principles of Christianity. For, what do we *see*, and *know*, to be the melancholy consequence? That thousands have attended *such* Instructors, and died as ignorant of real Christianity, as an idolatrous Hindoo! The general mode of public preaching is that, of delivering a classical Essay, or an immethodical Discourse, *before* the congregation—not, *to* them. There is no personal address—no accurate discrimination of character—nothing *directly* applied to the judgment, to the conscience, to the heart—no calls to serious self-examination—in short, nothing that is calculated to instruct the most ignorant, to alarm the most careless, "to warn the unruly, to comfort the feeble-minded, or to support the weak:" though much, perhaps, that is ingenious, elegant, concise, and moral. But, where is that original Christianity, which Paul preached?

The christian State is always to be considered as a State of Grace, and Salvation; according to the Doctrine already established. The christian Life has so much transcendency in it, as to be denominated "the Life of God—the Life of Christ—and the Life of Faith;" to point out to us its surprising elevation above the life of Nature, Reason, and Sense. And, the christian Character is so extremely different from that of other Men, who are not

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and, by which so many thousands were converted to *the Faith?*

"Do you know a greater than St. Paul? Can you conceive virtue in a more eminent degree? Behold a man, fired with Zeal—making what he thought the cause of God his own cause—God's enemies his enemies—the interests of God his interests. Behold a man, who turns his attention to Truth—and, the moment he discovers it, embraces and openly avows it. Behold a man, not content to be an ordinary christian, and to save himself alone, but aspiring at the glory of carrying through the whole world for public advantage that light, which had illuminated himself. Behold a man, preaching, writing—what am I saying? Behold a man, suffering, dying, and sealing with his own blood the truths he taught!"

diligently aspiring to it, that, in proportion as it is really attained, and exhibited, it is the reverse of the Proud, the Avaricious, the Worldly, the Careless, the Dissipated, the Sensual, the Vain, and, the Self-righteous*.

* It is the peculiar property and the transcendent worth of sacred Truth, to hold up a clear, unsullied, and faithful Mirrour to every one of these Characters; that they may discover their real Selves. Error, on the contrary, under a thousand different forms, steps in with a false one, that they may continue in a state of Self-deceit. And yet, we are told of the *Innocence*, of this greatest of all Impostors, and Cheats!

" Error, is like a Line drawn obliquely from the strait path of Truth; which, however insignificant the deviation may seem at the first, appears in the end at a distance from it, which ought to alarm us. Hence, if people did but look forward to the consequences of their opinions, and judgments, or were disposed to weigh them in " the balance of the Sanctuary," they would certainly be more cautious of entertaining misconceptions in these great matters, and of treating them with so much immoral levity." They would then be " looking *diligently* lest any man fail of *the Grace of God*."

There is indeed a Syren-voice of Candour, and Charity, among us, which has superseded that of Integrity, and Truth, to so perilous a degree, that the latter cannot be heard without disgust, and offence! It is exactly that, which is calculated to sooth all the characters, we have

Under this last Article, or, the christian Character, are necessarily included those "*good Works,*" upon the nature of which we have been rather minute—for the sake of guarding the more effectually against those no less common than destructive mistakes, which are afloat, upon this material subject. The most strenuous Advocates, for pure and uncorrupt Christianity, from the commencement of the christian Era down to the present period, have been injuriously charged with an extravagant ardour for *Grace*, and *Faith*, and with betraying a cold indifference to the cause of practical Religion. Let this then be accepted as an apology for our dwelling a little longer on the latter.

That all the Decrees and Institutions of the dread Sovereign of the Universe, whether they respect the designs of Provi-

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just detailed, in every delusion, the most fatal to their eternal peace—however gratifying they may be to their folly in this present life.

dence, or of Redemption, should be regarded with the most deferential and obedient submission, it were presumptuous to dispute. And indeed, however they may be slighted, or opposed, by the Reptiles of the earth, though more exalted than Pharaoh, Sennacherib, or Nebuchadnezzar, they must infallibly be accomplished. It is equally our Wisdom, Duty, and Happiness, to bow before them all, with the language of our great Example in our lips, and say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. Thy will be done." Matt. xi. 25, 26*.

* Instead of disputing about the irreversible Institutes of the divine Sovereignty, which can never be disannulled, should we not be more wisely and piously, as well as humbly employed, in acquiring the most exalted ideas of his Supremacy, and Godhead? Would it not tend very much to expand and improve our mental Powers, were we to meditate more frequently on the incomprehensible sublimity of his Essence; on the immense variety of his Works; and on the magnificence of those mighty Acts recorded in his own Oracles for our learning? Consult the views, which Nebuchadnezzar was taught to form of him, in the exercise of his *right Reason*. Dan. iv. 34——37.

What then is the unchangeable Will of GOD, respecting *The christian Walk?* It

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Whatever difficulties or mysteries there may appear to us in the process of Nature, in the movements of Providence, or in the dispensations of Grace, are they not the necessary consequence of our finite capacity? Can we be supposed to be competent Judges of the proceedings of infinite Wisdom? Is it for us, to search an Understanding, the very thought of which is enough to confound the strongest human Intellect? It would be more rational, in the smallest Insect in creation, to attempt to fathom the genius of an Archangel. Is it not strange, that all the Learning, Experience, and Philosophy of six thousand years have not even yet taught mankind the great practical lesson, of their own *Nothingness*, in the presence of that Being, before whom "they are counted *less than nothing?*"

Marvellous then as his Conduct may seem, ought we not to say, "It is THE LORD; let him do what seemeth him best?" For, after all, "the Counsel of the Lord shall stand, and he will perform all his pleasure"—without consulting our vain opinions about the reason and fitness of things. Let us then, instead of provoking the eyes of his glory with our idle and profane speculations, adore that Revelation, which assures us, that, though his way is in the sea, and his footsteps can never be traced by us, "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own Will."

"Know then, that heav'nly Wisdom on this ball
"Creates, gives birth to, guides, and governs all:

is his divine Ordinance, that those, who are his spiritual Workmanship, and in a state of Salvation, should walk religiously in good Works—according to the several stations, in which they are disposed, and according to the different talents, with which they are endowed, by the original Proprietor, and Lord of all; to whom they must render their final account: remembering always, that the higher they rise, in rank, or in abilities, the brighter they are required to shine. Matt. v. 16*.

" That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man
" Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan—
" He first conceives, then perfects his design,
" As a mere Instrument in hands divine:
" Blind to the working of that secret Pow'r,
" Which balances the wings of ev'ry hour,
" The busy Trifler dreams himself alone,
" Frames many a purpose—and, *God works his own.*
" None ever yet impeded what he wrought;
" None bars him out from his most secret thought;
" Darkness itself before his Eye is light,
" And Hell's close mischief naked in his sight."

* Some peculiar circumstances in modern history, almost unequalled in the annals of Providence, have been

Let us dilate then, on

SECTION XIII.

The extensive Import of walking in good Works.

When the image of *walking* is applied to the exercises of Godliness, or to spiri-

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fraught with the most important lessons of instruction to what are called, *the Great*, and *the Nobles*, of this world. If they will not read *the Scriptures*, let them read FACTS, and no longer forget, that it is GOD alone, who raises them above the rest of their Kind, not for the purposes of pride and vanity, insolence and oppression, but, to be "the Protectors of the People—the Supports of the Church—the Encouragers of Religion—the Friends of Virtue—the Comforters of the afflicted—the Refuge of the helpless—and the Models of Excellence." Otherwise, their Power is a general misfortune; their Example, infectious; their Influence, destructive; and their Elevation, a Curse. "Great God! how terrible shall one day be the trial of the rich, and powerful—since, besides their own evil passions, they shall be made accountable to Thee for the public irregularities, the depravity of the manners, and the corruptions of the Age!—If there be any thing really flattering or enviable in Rank, it is not those empty distinctions attached to it by custom and ignorance; it is the privilege and the honour of becoming the chief Instruments employed by Heaven for the accomplishment of his most benevolent and merciful designs on earth."

tual exertions, it presupposes *spiritual Life*. For, the dead cannot move. So that, in order to " walk, so as to please God—to walk humbly with him—to walk by Faith —and, to walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith we are called," it is previously requisite, that we should be " quickened," be made spiritually alive, or have felt " the power" of the Resurrection of Christ upon our hearts. You see this.

To walk—both in a natural, and in a spiritual sense—implies a certain measure of *strength*, and *activity*. For, though we may be alive, we may be so weak, and helpless, as to be quite incapacitated for walking. If then we would walk in " good works," we must acquire that vigour, which is adequate to such an undertaking; we must seek it, where alone it is to be had; and we must make use of the Means, instituted by " the Head over all things to his Church," for that very purpose. For all the needful information on

each of those particulars, we have only to search the inspired Records. Eph. iv. 7——16. . . . iii. 14——21 *.

Walking, it should be noticed, is a *progressive* motion; in which we gain ground, advance, go forward: and the figure is introduced here, and adapted to spiritual concerns, to remind us, that, having once set out in heavenly pursuits, so far must we be from standing still, or retreating, that, we must be continually increasing in

* Perfectly according with this idea, numberless are the *Promises* of divine Grace and Strength to be found in the inspired Writings: and, to urge mankind to the attainment of christian Virtues, or to the performance of christian Duties—which is continually done—without affording them this encouragement, is a cruelty by no means less than that of the Egyptian taskmasters—in requiring the Israelites to make brick without straw. The divine Promises were originally given, and ought always to be administered, for the consolation of those, who are sincerely engaged in the christian Warfare. Neither is there any Power, adequate to this arduous undertaking, and to final victory, but that which is almighty. Eph. vi. 10——18. In vain do we expect any christian magnanimity, or heroism, from those, who are not fighting under this Banner. Is. xl. 26——31.

all pious attainments—"forgetting the things, which are behind," and, in the energetic style of the Apostle, "*reaching forth* unto the things, that are before, and *pressing* towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Is not this the true idea of christian Perfection? Philip. iii. 14——21*.

* And is not this what we must all aim at? For, is there any midway in true Religion? Is it not the duty of every intelligent Being, of every moral Agent, to adhere to Truth, and perseveringly to follow Virtue? "We bring into the world with us, and we are incessantly surrounded with great obstacles to both: our labour is, to rise superior to them—or be covered with shame and infamy. Without this, we betray our trust; we do not answer the end of our creation; we are guilty, and we shall be punished for not endeavouring to obtain that end. Neither is there any point fixed in this endeavour—in which it is allowable to stop. We must be making continual progress." The Man, who is satisfied with the degree of Religion, he already possesses, may be assured, that he does not even understand the nature of Religion. For, what are the highest degrees attainable in this life? Those, who are the deepest read in the Science of Salvation, will be the first to own, that, *they are nothing*. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Την γαρ ἀσθενειαν την εμαυτε μετρειν εμαθον. "For, I have learnt what a mere nothing I am."

With this idea indeed, there is another inseparably connected, which may as well be specified—that of, *persevering*. For, the practical Goodness, which forms the Character, we are now faintly sketching, is not a Goodness of accident, but, of habit: it is not that uncertain and frivolous thing, which is governed by caprice: it is, as to the grand outline, " stedfast, and immoveable;" enduring to the end, and faithful unto death: and, though it may not always burn, or shine, with equal splendour, it is the absolute Determination of Him, " with whom is no variableness," that it shall never fail. The Light of divine Grace may be partially obscured, by the storms and tempests of afflictive trial—but, nothing shall ever be able to extinguish it. Let us consult what was written aforetime to this effect, for our learning, and comfort, for our patience, and hope, in the following passages of the Covenant of Grace, Life, and Peace. Matt. xi. 28——30. John vi. 37——40. . . . x. 27——30. Rom. viii. 31——39. . . .

1 Cor. i. 8, 9. . . Phil. i. 6. . . Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. . . xlii. 16. . . . . 2 Cor. xii. 8——10. . . . 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. . . . Jude 24, 25*.

* I can see no possibility of Happiness myself, for those, who are *above all things* solicitous of the divine pardon, and favour—nor any prospect of their Security in a course of Virtue and Goodness—but what they derive from these Authorities. To me it seems, that, what the Scriptures mean by *Self-knowledge* will necessitate a man to take refuge in them, and in many others to the same effect, for all his Peace, and Safety. Many *learned* men, I am conscious, are of a totally different opinion; and they would direct us to our own Free-will, and inherent Sufficiency: otherwise, what *merit*, say they, would there be in our Goodness, and Virtue? In the first place, christian Humility and divine Grace *abhor* the doctrine of *Merit:* and in the next place, it is Solomon, I think, who tells us, that, "He, who trusteth in his own Heart, is *a Fool:*" and he, who depends on his moral Powers, is not much wiser. Let the Learned have all due respect: but, I have quoted, in my defence, David, Isaiah, Matthew, John, Paul, and Jude; and they are, to say the least, their *Equals*. As an Appendix to these inspired Authorities, it were easy to subjoin *unquestionably* the brightest ornaments of the christian Church, since the ever memorable period of the Reformation. But, if the holy Scriptures be not competent to decide in this case, no human dignity or erudition can add any thing to their weight. Rom. iii. 1——4.

It may safely be inserted then, as among the irrepealable Ordinances of Heaven, that those, who are "created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, should *walk* in them." And why so*? For a variety of reasons—and all of them becoming the Dignity, the Wisdom, the Benevolence, of that Being, who hath thus decreed.

That the Grace of God, considered as a divine Influence, operating effectually upon the human Mind, and Heart, as a Principle of life, and action, is an inward, secret, and mysterious thing, will not be denied. Neither is it at all absurd, enthusiastic, or even unphilosophical, to argue, that the Spirit of Grace can and does act after this manner upon

* This question is started—because, when we assert the Salvation of man to be *wholly* of Grace, ignorance, inconsideracy, and prejudice would immediately infer the Non-necessity of good works—as if there were no place to be found for them. Let us see.

" the Spirit of a Man, which is in him." For, why should it not be as natural for Spirit to act upon spirit, as Matter upon matter * ?

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* The very ingenious Author of " the Religion of Nature delineated" has allowed, that, some thoughts, designs, and operations of Mind may not only proceed from corporeal causes—or may be occasioned by something said or done by other men—but, that they may be occasioned by *the suggestion* and *impulse*, or other *silent communications* of some *spiritual Being*; perhaps the Deity himself. For, that such imperceptible *influences*, and *still whispers* may be, none of us all can positively deny: that is, we cannot certainly know, that there are no such things. On the contrary, I believe there are but few of them, who have made observations, but must, when they reflect on life past, and its various events, find many instances, in which their usual judgment and sense of things have been *over-ruled*, they know not *by what*, nor *how*, nor *why*; that they have actually done things, which they afterwards wonder how they came to do; and that these actions have had consequences very remarkable in their history.

" It is not impossible, continues the same Writer, that many things, suitable to several cases, may be brought to pass by means of *secret* and *sudden Influences* on our minds. The Heathens were of this opinion: otherwise, Homer would have had no opportunity of introducing their Deities, as he doth. " Homer, says Plutarch, does not make God to destroy the Will of

To ask—" but how are we to distinguish, in those inward, secret, and mysterious Operations, between the illusions of an uncorrected Fancy, the reveries of Mysticism, and the vagaries of a Fanatic," is a very fair enquiry—and ought to be seriously regarded. The Answer is, " by their Fruits ye shall know them." For, while the former never fail to inspire the soul with penitential humility, and self-abasement, before God; with a lively

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man, αλλα κινεντα την προαιρεσιν, but only to *move him to will*—by exciting the powers and faculties of the Soul, by some secret principles, or by diverting and stopping them."

Such language may be permitted those, who are Advocates for the Religion of Reason, and Philosophy: but in *us*, who contend for that of Revelation, it will be deemed fanatical, and enthusiastic! No wonder that St. Paul thought it " a small matter, to be judged of *Man's judgment:*" that mass of unprincipled contradiction, and absurdity. For, whether we are determined by Reason, or by Revelation, what is the nature of all *Prayer*, but the application of the heart to God for his divine Influence, and Agency? But, the persons, who reject the latter, make but little use, it is to be feared, of the former.

faith in the Person, mediatorial Character, and Offices, of the Redeemer; and with that adoring love, "which is shed abroad upon the heart by the holy Ghost;" they excite, at the same time, to those Works of faith, and to those Labours of love, which are said to "accompany Salvation*."

Far be it from us, however, to build again the things, we have been attempt-

* It is a circumstance, which reflects but little honour on our common nature, that there should be so many among us, who, through an excessive and contemptible fear of being thought either superstitious, or enthusiastic, will not even appear to be religious, and devout. We have also read, in ancient records, that, Ενιοι φευγοντες την Δεισιδαιμονιαν εμπιπτουσιν εις Αθεοτητα τραχειαν και αντιτυπον, υπερπεδησαντες εν μεσω κειμενην την Ευσεβειαν: "Some, in order to avoid Superstition, have fallen into the wildest and most obstinate Atheism—and trampled upon that Piety, which lies between either extreme."—Plut. So that, our modern Philosophists must not presume that they are distinguishing themselves by any *Novelty* of Character—any more than our modern Sceptics. They are only despicable Imitators of more pitiable Predecessors: who were not favoured with *the Light*, which these are so profligate as to reject. They chuse rather to "glory in their Shame, than to bow to that celebrated maxim, Γυμνασιον της ψυχης η ανθρωπινη Σοφια, Τελος δε η Θεια.

ing to destroy. To avoid so dangerous an Error—and, that we may in no respect be thought "to frustrate *the Grace* of God," we repeat—that no religious performances, though estimable and recommendatory in every other view, are the *grounds* of our Acceptance into the divine Favour, or of our final admission to the divine Glory. We look to no *Conditions* of Salvation, but what were undertaken, executed, and perfected, by that wonderful Object, who, both God and Man in one Christ, became the voluntary Substitute, Surety, Sacrifice, and Saviour "to the uttermost, for all who come unto God by HIM."

Ignorance, and Impiety, it has been noticed, may infer from hence, that there is neither necessity, nor occasion, for any "good Works;" that they are wholly superfluous: but, pure Religion, undefiled Christianity, or, "the Truth as it is in Jesus," will teach us another lesson. For, though it will tell us to anchor all our hope,

and peace, and happiness, on this eternal Rock, it will remind us, that all "good Works" are to be cultivated, as so many *Proofs*, that we are indeed partakers of the Grace of God; that we are the living Members of the mystical body of Christ; and, that we do certainly belong to that "Church, that general Assembly, whose Names are written in heaven:" and, were there no other use of them, would not this alone be sufficient to provoke us to abound therein?

But, these "good Works"—though in no degree meritorious of eternal Life *—

* A mere Critic, a man of classical Refinement, or a secret Adversary to the doctrine of Grace, may be disgusted with this perpetual repetition of the same thing. But, it is *designed*. There is a serious cause, not to say, necessity, for it. We are "*earnestly* to contend for *The Faith*," emphatically, and specifically. "We can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth:" and, the Truth is only so far worth attending to, as it is consistent with itself. God is not the Author of any species of Confusion, intellectual, or moral. And the Advocates for the innocence of any *Error*, or *Inconsistency*, whether it respect Grace, Faith, or Works, are perhaps the most

are to be very highly esteemed as *the moral Beauty* of the Soul. It was the spotless Purity of the Son of God, which rendered him "the Brightness of his Father's glory, and the express Image of his Person. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; full of *Grace*, and full of *Truth*;" and, shamefully as these Excellencies are undervalued in human estimation, in the sight of God they are of great price. They cannot indeed

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dangerous and fatal Enemies, with which Christianity has to combat; because the most specious, and subtle.

"All falshood," says a Writer of great calmness, erudition, and judgment, "is opposite to Truth. Error is that falshood, which, availing itself of the weakness of the Understanding, the depravity of the Will, or the undue influence of the Imagination"—to which he should have added, the prejudices of the Mind, and the pride of the Heart—"assumes the colour of Truth, by which Reason is deceived. Truth is the health—Error, the disorder, of the Soul: the one leading to honour and happiness; the other, to disgrace and misery. It becomes us therefore to level *bold* and efficient strokes at *the Root* of the tree of Error, and not to be eternally employed in beating among the branches; where, if one be cut off, two may spring up in its place."

entitle us to the Inheritance of the saints; but, they are the lovely ornaments of the christian Character. Tit. ii. 1——10.

Had not a Revelation, which professes itself to be "The Wisdom of God," tended, in its nature, and doctrine, to assimilate intelligent Beings to their great Original, who could accredit it? And, can any of us be so uninformed in matters of supreme moment, as not to know, that *Holiness* is the Beauty, as well as the Essence, of the Godhead? Is he not represented to us, as "glorious in Holiness?" Hath he not taken to himself the very Name of Holiness? And, is not this Perfection the never-ceasing theme of Adoration to the seraphic Host? Search the Scriptures—and, judge for yourselves. Is. vi.

In proportion then as we abound in all the fruits of Righteousness, and *true* Holiness, we resemble the very Fountain of light, life, and spiritual Beauty *: we are

* Were a man of Taste and Talent, equal to the undertaking, to employ his Genius in an elaborate, and highly

the objects of his approval, and delight: and, though at the best "altogether Va-

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finished Disquisition, concerning the various kinds of Beauty—simple, artificial, ornamental, and the like—whether in building, horticulture, or figure, we should hear of his fame in all the public Journals. But, what if we aver, that there is a certain species of Beauty, which in point of superiority and excellence, leaves every thing of this sort at an immeasurable distance? Plato seemed to have acquired some idea of it; from what quarter, we shall not conjecture. His first Cause was, "*The supreme Beauty:*" and, certainly, the sacred Oracles have presented him to our contemplation, as such.

But, in the study of *Beauty*, the human Mind should ascend according to the following Scale. 1. Beauties of Art, and inanimate Nature. 2. Beauties, of living Figure. 3. Beauties, of Intellect. 4. Beauties, of moral Conduct. 5. Beauties, of Religion and Virtue, Devotion and Grace. —It is on the last of these, that the great Original of all beauty has put an honour, which is as eternal, as his own duration. Such is "*the beauty of Holiness*;" the beauty of the Soul. All other beauty is variable, transient, and finite: this alone is undecaying, and immortal: for, it is the faint reflexion of the divine beauty, and glory, delineated on the human Soul.

The original righteousness, or perfect moral beauty, in which our nature was at first created, consisted in this very thing—if we admit the testimony of Scripture; which informs us, that, "God created man in his own *Image*." Could this be corporeal? Impossible. "For,

nity" in ourselves, if this "Beauty of the Lord our God be *upon us*," we are, in so far, the reflexion of his own Image! To be ambitious of such a Similitude would do honour to the noblest Mind, and the most exalted Genius *.

God is a Spirit." In what then did it consist? Clearly, in the *perfection* of his knowledge, his love, and his obedience to the Will of God. This was what constituted his Wisdom, his Righteousness, and his true Holiness: in which there was neither defect, nor deviation; not the smallest propensity to that which is evil—whether in omission or in commission; but the most delightful conformity to the divine Law, in every thought, in every word, in every deed. How it was possible for moral evil to find any admission into his mind and heart, under these circumstances, in the first instance, is an enquiry, which has been investigated by human Reason and Philosophy, for many centuries, to very little purpose. After all that has been said, unless we are satisfied with the *scriptural* account, we may start afresh with the old question, Ποθεν το κακον;

* What constitutional Infirmities, or incidental Evils, may or may not attach to those, who are thus transformed into the divine Image—either from temptation without, or from corruption within—let those determine, who affect to be of the privy Council of Heaven. I move not in that Sphere; nor am I private Secretary to that Cabinet. I meddle not in such matters; they are

There is yet another cause to be assigned, why the most diligent and zeal-

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too high for me. Suffice it for us, if we conscientiously and faithfully adhere to "the Law, and to the Testimony:" and, "as many as walk according to *this Rule*, peace be on them, and mercy, and on the Israel of God!" Some consolatory Relief however may be derived, in situations of despondency and sorrow of heart, from Rom. vii. and from the occasional Frailties of the greatest Characters handed down to us in holy Writ. 1 Cor. x. 11——13. There are Worthies celebrated in Hebr. xi. which, had I been left to the operations of my own *Reason*, I could never have supposed to have been the Saints of the most High—"Nevertheless, what saith *the Scripture?*" The Judgment of human Reason, and the Decisions of divine Revelation, are, in most cases, extremely the reverse: and, shall it be a question, which ought to stand? 1 Pet. i. 24, 25.

I have a Work before me, which has been submitted to public notice as containing the undisguised effusions of a Clergyman of great pious celebrity: in which, it was scarcely possible not to remark the upright, honest ingenuousness of the subsequent personal records.

"I have been deceived all my life by sayings of Philosophers, scraps of Verses, and most of all by *the Pride of my own heart*, into an opinion of *Self-power*—which the Scripture plainly tells me, and I find by repeated fruitless efforts, *I have not*. I fly from myself to God; I appeal from myself to Christ. I cannot work Repentance in myself—I cannot purify my own Heart—I cannot change

ous observance of "good Works" is one of the divine Constitutions. It is enjoined,

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my Nature. What ſhall I do, to live one day without sin!

"I am horribly proud, without ground or pretence, and with great cause for humiliation. I know this, and still I am horribly proud. Oh! if the world knew, or I myself knew what God knows of me, how should I then appear?

"I am perpetually looking out for some Fitness in myself—some procuring cause of God's acceptance of me: and yet I believe this is pure opposition to the Gospel-scheme, and the very Infidelity, against which St. Paul, in particular, levels all his reasonings; the more dangerous, as the more ſpecious—and, at all times, the Religion of the more ſober and rational part of mankind.

"Two things I know with infallible certainty—that I cannot help myself, and that I am unhelped. I have wiſhes—form reſolutions—make efforts—say prayers—mention particular ſins; but do not find, that I am a jot the better!

"Strange—that I ſhould be conſcious of ſuch a nature, and yet be unhumbled! but then, at the worſt, there is a capability of Goodneſs: and, therefore, ſo long as I have breath, I will preſent my caſe before the God of my life."

What would the pride of Reaſon and Philoſophy teach us to think of *ſuch* Confeſſions? And yet, thoſe, who are the moſt devoted to ſacred Studies, and are the deepeſt read in the Science of human Nature, aſſure us, that all this is the language of *true Self-knowledge*.

because nothing is so beneficial to the Order, the Peace, the Happiness, of Individuals—Communities—and Empires. All the voluminous Institutes of Policy, which have been compiled by the most profound Learning, and Experience, are not to be named with the two great Commandments of the Law:" were they only respected according to their sanction, and utility, they would absolutely render all other Legislation needless. Our departure from *them* has occasioned the multiplied Statutes of almost every political State, and which are now become one of the sorest miseries, under which the human Kind are suffering.

For this universal and complicated evil, the most efficacious, if not the sole remedy would be, a practical adherence to the Religion of Christ: and, were we called upon to engage in so arduous and extensive an employment, we foresee no insuperable difficulty, in making it appear, that genuine, unadulterated CHRIS-

TIANITY is not only a sublime Scheme of Redemption—a supernatural Change of mind, and heart—the real Dignity of our Nature—and the Conversion of the Soul, from the vanities of time, and sense, to its chief Good—but, that it is the *only* Source of true Happiness, to Man; to Societies; to Kingdoms*.

If therefore they be decisive *Proofs* of our actual participation of the divine

* Upon these Principles—which to my understanding are alike manly, benevolent, and rational—I am not ashamed of being pronounced a Bigot to Christianity; if that term mean nothing more than a declarative Avowal of my fervid attachment to this divine System, and an unyielding, invincible aversion to all that Infidelity, which opposes it, and that Philosophism, which would subvert it. I abhor the *sceptical* Candour, which may be ranked among *the moral Evils* of the day. It is fraught with mischief; a gilded Poison. It may dazzle the undistinguishing eye; but, take heed, that it does not destroy the sight. The very Sources of sacred Truth are corrupted by the *modern* ideas of Charity, and Candour. I may have said as much before: but, never mind the snarling, currish Critic: in matters of high importance, a little Repetition, so far from being inelegant, or superfluous, may be a real excellence.

Grace: if they be the *Ornaments*, and *Beauties*, of the christian Character; and, if they be *profitable* to all men, in every class and condition of life—are we not invited, by every motive of Self-love, of Piety, and of Benevolence, "to be careful to maintain *good Works?*" and, is not he, the most to be approved, and envied, who is the most "enriched with all the fruits of Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God*?"

2 Cor. ix. 8.

* As we cannot enlarge upon so many particulars, the Reader will condescend to accept a rough sketch of the Orbit of good Works, in which every real Christian is supposed to revolve. These good Works then necessarily include public Worship; or the pious, strict, and regular observation of the Lord's day: all the domestic, and relative Duties—especially those, which belong to *family Religion:* together with private Meditation, and Prayer: prayer—not merely as it is the elevation of the voice, the hands, or the eyes, to Heaven—but, as it is *The Ascent of the Soul to God*, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, under the gracious Agency of the holy Ghost: for which reason, it is called "the *grace* of supplication, and the *spirit* of prayer:" without which, there can be no real approach to God.

" Go, Christian, then, and with the treasures blest
" Of *Grace*, and *Faith*, resembling Pattern, shew
" How JESUS liv'd—thy lov'd and loving Lord.
" Go, copy his humility, his Zeal
" To glorify his Father, his contempt
" Of vain, base earth; *Disciple of his Cross.*
" His temp'rance copy, resignation, truth,
" His meekness, pity, large benevolence;
" His godlike fortitude, firm constancy,
" His love of holy privacy, and prayer.
" Go, happy *Fav'rite*, feed *his* pining Poor,
" Silent in patient want—the friendless poor—
" Neglected by a selfish, wicked world.
" Thy *Saviour-Judge* thy love-remember'd work
" With echo'd *Euge* shall applaud and crown."

Matt. xxv. 34——40 *.

Those then are the works of Piety, which cannot fail of being accompanied with the moral exercises of Tenderness, Mercy, Compassion, and all *the secondary Virtues*—if we are indeed "created in Christ Jesus." Nor can any man be ignorant of them, who will study only the 12th chapter of the epistle to the Romans: which, for pith and comprehension of matter, cannot be exceeded.

* So that, though we think ourselves bound to adhere to the purity of sacred Truth, in rejecting the anti-christian error, which asserts the merit or conditional worthiness of good Works—for, in that case, they cease to be good—we argue, with equal firmness, their necessity, in evidencing the christian State; in forming the christian Character; and in distinguishing the christian Walk,

from theirs, who walk in pride and vanity, in avarice and licentiousness, according to the course of this world, and in opposition to the revealed Will and Word of God.

Necessaria sunt, tum ex Dei mandato—tum ex Rei ipsius naturâ—et ex hominis fidelis conditione. Consulantur præcipuè Joh. xiii. 34. Rom. vi. 11, 12. . . . xii. 1, 2. . . . 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. Quod ex statu hominis fidelis clariùs potest demonstrari, sive attendamus ad fœdus Gratiæ; ad Evangelii doctrinam, quam profitetur; ad statum Gratiæ, in quo collocatur; vel, ad Beneficia quæ indè pendent: quæ omnia bonorum operum necessitatem post se trahunt.

Tria sunt equidem, quorum quærendorum præ cæteris necessitas nobis incumbit—Dei scilicet gloria, Proximi exemplum, et propria ædificatio in Fide nostra sanctissima: unde vocantur sigilla Gratiæ—primitiæ Gloriæ futuræ—Spei seminaria—Charitatis incentiva—Via regni, sed non *Causa*, vel *Conditio*, regnandi.

Qui bene distinguit, bene docet.

ASSERTION 8.

ALL THE DIVINE FAVOURS AND INFLUENCE, DISPLAYED IN THE OBJECTS OF GRACE AND SALVATION, ARE COMMUNICATED IN AND THROUGH CHRIST JESUS.

Ὁ Πατηρ. αγαπα τον υιον, και παντα δεδωκεν εν τῃ χειρι αυτȣ.
Και παντα υπεταξεν υπο τȣς ποδας αυτȣ· και αυτον εδωκε κιφαλην υπερ παντα τῃ εκκλησια.
Εις οικονομιαν τȣ πληρωματος των καιρων, ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι τα παντα εν τω Χριστω, τα τε εν τοις ȣρανοις και τα επι της γης.

" THOU art the Source and Centre of all minds,
" Their only point of Rest, ETERNAL WORD!
" From Thee departing, they are lost—and rove
" At random—without Honour, Hope, and Peace.
" From THEE is all that sooths the life of Man,
" His high Endeavour, and his glad Success;
" His Strength to suffer, and his Will to serve.
" But O, thou bounteous Giver of all good,
" Thou art of all thy gifts THYSELF the crown!
" Give what thou canst, without THEE we are poor,
" And with THEE, rich—take what thou wilt away."

Τα παντα και εν πασι Χριστος.

WERE I an Infidel myself—or, what we generally understand by a Deist, a Free-thinker, a modern Philosophist—and most unhappily disposed to attack the

christian Faith in every direction, I should feel myself particularly justified in exhibiting the infamy of those, who, while they profess to be its Advocates, are industriously cautious *not* to use the language of Inspiration: who deem it ingenuity, taste, elegance, originality, to adopt any other Style, and Expression, than that in which the Prophets and Evangelists were instructed to convey to us the Wisdom of the most High! They are even vain and proud of imitating the manner of Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Tully, Sallust, or Seneca, rather than that of the ancient Seers, and Apostles*!

* What can be more painful to men of the best Reason, and Intellect, than to observe the profane familiarity and licence, with which the *Style* of the divine Oracles has been protested! Thus, some have censured it as obscure—others, as immethodical—others, as inelegant—others, as incoherent—others, as insipid, low, and vulgar! utterly disregarding all the various and unequalled Beauties of every description, with which the most exalted Talents, Learning, Criticism, and Piety, have repeatedly proved they even abound. So that nothing can possibly exceed them, for their diversity of excellence, in this respect.

" Are these the Men," I should exclaim, were I inimical to the christian Code, " who aspire to the secular emoluments of their Religion? Are these the Characters, that affect to glory in the Redeemer's Cross? Are these they, who would persuade us to believe, that " holy men of God *spake* as they were moved by the holy Ghost," and that their Creed descended through them from the eternal Fountain of Sapience, and Truth? Why

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But, was this Revelation afforded us for the purpose of instructing mankind in the sublime, the beautiful, the sententious, the copious, the neat, the brilliant, the harmonious, the classical, in *Language*, and *Composition?* Ridiculous! contemptible! The sacred Scriptures are indeed enriched with the most inimitable specimens of the simple, the grand, the pathetic, in Style: but, these are only incidental and occasional circumstances—far beneath their great Design; which is of an *infinitely* higher order. Their objects are immortal; *Truth*, *Piety*, and *Bliss*. And yet, the very *Words*, in which they address us, ought to be venerated. It is a part of Religion, to respect their *Manner:* but, their *Matter*, is Religion itself. So, such men, as Boyle, and Pascal, would say: and, in *this* Age, where may we look, in any expectation of finding their *Equals?*

then so shy of breathing their Spirit? why blush to adopt their heavenly Strains? Do they indeed *mean*, what they *profess*—and credit, what they aver?"

One of the most effectual methods of preserving the purity of genuine Christianity, is, to preserve its *Language*; and, the more so, as its language is, in some particulars, almost as discriminative, as its *Doctrines*: and, perhaps, for that very reason *. The peculiarity of its Tenets may have occasioned a peculiarity of Phrase, which, I humbly presume, should

* The late surprising Revolution in a neighbouring Kingdom occasioned a perfectly novel Series, if I may so term it, in *Phraseology*. The Mind and Genius of those, who have faithfully recorded its Rise, Progress, and Issue, seem to labour for expression, to convey some adequate idea of its operations; and, in some instances, have coined new words for that purpose. I argue therefore from Analogy, when I contend, that the peculiar Doctrines of a divine Revelation may be supposed to demand a Language *peculiar* to themselves; as much as the respective Systems, which form the complete Circle of Science, may require a Language exclusively adapted to each.

be retained with a kind of moral delicacy: and, I beg leave to offer this, as a sufficient apology for the singular mode, in which I might otherwise be thought to have denoted the present ASSERTION: which is designed to affirm, that Jesus Christ is the great central Point of all the Determinations of God, respecting his spiritual Workmanship.

SECTION XIV.

How is it then, that these Determinations, whether they respect Energy, or Blessedness, are effected "in Christ Jesus?"

For the sake of giving some little variety to so extensive a discussion, we will proceed, in this branch of our Scheme, somewhat catechetically. It may serve to afford a kind of amusing relief to the Reader, without depriving us of any opportunity of being both precise, and perspicuous; which has been our chief Aim. Declamation might have been more entertaining: but, we wish to

enlighten—not, to dazzle: and, if we cannot be so happy, as to provide some valuable Lessons of Instruction, our solitary Talent might as well have been "hid in the earth." Too insignificant indeed for fame, or celebrity, like many a lowly Simple on the desert Heath, it may not be altogether destitute of some sanative qualities. Nor do we affect so extreme a modesty, as not to indulge that pleasing hope. Let the tall Cedar lift its towering head: while we, scarce seen, or noticed, with the retiring Violet, emit our grateful fragrance. We have no ambition to engage time, or to raise expectation, if we cannot give some good account to both.

In searching the inspired Writings, I am confident, we have manifold warrant for stating, that, the whole of their contents are so many rays of divine Light converging, and uniting, in one grand Focus; which is, JESUS CHRIST. This is my Position. Here follows the Analysis; es-

pecially, as it respects the Objects of Grace, and Salvation.

We have seen already, that, whatever may have been the nature, the number, or the aggravations, of their Offences against the supreme Governour of the Universe, they are all forgiven, and utterly obliterated. But why? For the sake of the Sacrifice, and Atonement of Jesus Christ—"the Lamb of God, who himself bore their Sins in his own Body on the Tree; by whose Stripes they are healed. For, him hath God set forth to be a Propitiation for sin, through Faith in his blood*."

* "That Christ suffered and died as an *Atonement* for the sins of mankind," says a lively and elegant Writer, "is a doctrine so constantly, and so strongly enforced through every part of the New Testament—that, whoever will seriously peruse those writings, and deny that it is there, may with as much *reason*, and *truth*, after reading the works of Thucydides and Livy, assert, that in them no mention is made of any facts relative to the histories of Greece and Rome."—This is saying quite enough. To write elaborate Treatises in defence of a doctrine so perfectly obvious and clear, is something worse than an idle waste of time, and erudition: it is calculated to render that, suspicious and questionable, which nothing but *wil-*

We have seen too, that they are justified in the sight of Heaven, from every charge, which can possibly be brought against them from any quarter. So that, they may boldly defy their Enemies, and Accusers, to arraign them at the Bar of God. But, how? and by whom, are they justified? The very same Person, "who was delivered for their Offences, was raised again for their Justification: and, by Him, all that believe, *are justified from all*

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ful blindness could possibly doubt: as if I were to pen a critical and learned Disquisition, to prove the existence of the solar Orb; which every Peasant may see, who will only make use of his eyes.

"It is remarkable, that notwithstanding all the *irrational* absurdities, with which this doctrine has been impiously charged, there is one circumstance much in its favour: which is, that it has been universally adopted in all ages, as far as history can carry us back in our enquiries to the earliest times; in which we find all nations, civilized and barbarous, however differing in all other opinions, agreeing alone in the expediency of appeasing their offended Deities *by sacrifices*—that is, by the *vicarious sufferings* of men and animals. This idea could never have originated from Reason or Instinct; nor indeed from any thing but *a supernatural Revelation.*"

things:" because, "the Righteousness of our God and Saviour is *unto* all and *upon* all them, that believe: for, by the deeds of the Law shall no flesh living be justified:" whereas, "Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness, or Justification, to every one, that *believeth:* that God may be just, and the Justifier of him, that believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 26.

As, in the history of the glorious Reformation of the sixteenth Century, this Article was considered, not merely as the great Line of distinction between Protestantism, and Popery, but, as the very Hinge upon which Christianity was thought to turn, I shall urge no other excuse for inserting the substance of it, in a few comprehensive Propositions, in this place*. If they are not as obvious,

* Among the several articles, which form the celebrated PROTEST, from whence the name of *Protestant* is derived, the following should be particularly noticed—that, "No doctrine was so certain as The Word of God, and nothing should be taught besides it: that, obscure

and as fundamental, in the christian Religion, as the belief of the existence of God, I confess myself incompetent to decide, whether two and two make four.

Proposition 1.

Justification is altogether a gracious and judicial Act of God—whereby he pronounces a guilty criminal perfectly

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passages of Scripture could not be better explained than by other plain places of the same Scripture: and that, the Writings of the Old and New Testament should be taught with the greatest plainness and purity. This is the only sure and infallible Way."—Such was the Spirit and Character of *Protestantism* in the year 1531. Since that period, has it not turned *Proteism?* Has it not assumed as many different forms, and appearances, as Scepticism, Philosophy, Duplicity, Craft, and Candour, could possibly give it? I congratulate the ignorance of the man, who knoweth not all the hideous metamorphoses, to which they have prostituted the sacred name of *Christianity*, during the eighteenth Century. Let us feast our eyes with its undistorted and native Image, in the pure Revelation of heaven. Nothing is intreated of the Reader here, but that he will survey it fairly, in all its parts, and in its connection; as the beautiful effect results very materially from the *tout ensemble.*

righteous, in, and for the sake of, Christ Jesus.—" Where is boasting then? It is excluded." How so? Because, "the grace of Justification is given to sinners without any regard to, or consideration of, any qualifying meetness, work, or condition, to be found in them, either *before* they are justified—or, *when* they are justified—or, *after* they are justified*.

Proposition 2.

The first moving Cause of justification is divine Grace†.

Proposition 3.

The material or mediatorial Cause of Justification, is, the imputed Righteousness of Christ; considered as the Representative, Surety, and Substitute of those,

* Proofs. Is. liii. . . . . xlv. 25. . . . . Acts, xiii. 38, 39. . . . Rom. iii. 24. . . . viii. 29, 30. . . . 1 Cor. vi. 11. . . . Rom. viii. 33——.

† Proofs. Rom. iii. 24. . . . iv. 4, 16. . . . v. 2, 21. . . . ii. 6. . . . . Gal. v. 4. . . . . Eph. i. 6, 7. . . . . ii. 5, 7. . . . 2 Tim. i. 9. . . . Tit. iii. 7. . . . 1 Pet. v. 10.

who are justified in and through Him.—With the objections, that are started, to this Principle, we have no manner of concern: the simple enquiry for us is, whether this be a Doctrine of pure Revelation. If it be, all human opinions and authorities, which oppugn it, are despicable; and, instead of being treated with Candour, should be rejected with pious Contempt *.

Proposition 4.

The instrumental or recipient Cause, by which we become personally, or actually interested in this Righteousness of Christ, for our complete justification, is, Faith †.—

* Proofs. Ps. lxxxix. 15, 16. . . . . Is. xlv. 24. . . . . liv. 17. . . . . lxi. 10. . . . . Jer. xxiii. 6. . . . . Dan. ix. 24. . . . . Rom. i. 16, 17. . . . . iii. 21, 22. . . . . v. 17, 18. . . . . ix. 30, 31, 32, 33. . . . . x. 3——13. . . . . 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. . . . . 2 Cor. v. 18——21. . . . . Rom. iv.—After such plain and decisive authorities, for the doctrine of imputed Righteousness, should we pity, or should we despise, the Subtilty, the Sophistry, the Blasphemy, that dares to oppose it?

† Proofs. Rom. iii. 19——31. . . . . ix. 30. . . . . x. 6. . . . . Gal. iii. . . . . Eph. ii. 8. . . . iii. 12, 17. . . . .

Ingenuous Minds will not suffer themselves to detach one link of this golden Chain from another, for the purpose of venting any malicious opposition to sacred Truth; and, they will generously recollect, how this grace, of Faith, has been exhibited in a former part of the present Summary.

Proposition 5.

The Faith, by which we are justified, and saved, is the special Gift of God—peculiar to his Elect—and of his own

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Phil. iii. 9. . . . 2 Tim. iii. 15. . . . 1 Pet. i. 5. . . . 2 Pet. i. 1. . . . . Rom. v. 1, 2. . . . Fidei quæ justificat objectum generale asserimus esse totum Dei verbum: speciale, Christum Mediatorem; formale quod justificat, Christum ut Pontificem, Sacerdotem, ut λυτρον et pretium Redemptionis nostræ: non quòd Christi officia in negotio Justificationis disjungimus, sed distinguimus.

Fides justificat sub ratione *Instrumenti:* non ut Instrumentum physicum, sed morale—cujus tota vis pendet ex institutione divinâ; non aliter quàm ærei Serpentis aspectus valebat olim ad levamen et salutem Israelitarum. Sic fide justificamur; sed non ex dignitate fidei, sed ex dignatione divinâ—cui *de integro* debetur tanti et tam *gratuiti* beneficii Honos et Gloria.

Operation *.—We may talk of the reasonableness of Faith, and the Philosophy of Faith; but, common Capacities are not, generally speaking, equal to such disquisitions; and our principal business, is, with that *Grace* of Faith, so frequently proposed to our notice in the inspired Oracles.

Proposition 6.

We are therefore "justified *freely*, by the *Grace* of God, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus†."

* Proofs. Rom. i. 8.... Tit. i. 1.... Eph. ii. 8.... Col. ii. 12..... Fides consideratur vel in persona justificati—ita Radix est omnium virtutum in quantum operatur per charitatem; vel in effectu justificationis—sic Janua est ad vitam æternam; vel in actu justificationis—et eo respectu dicimus esse instrumentum, non quatenus ad extra operatur, sed quatenus ad intra *recipit Christum*—in relatione ad quem tota vis Fidei justificantis consistit. Hæc est Πιστις της ενεργειας τ Θεϑ.

† This Proposition is expressed, verbatim, in the language of holy Writ. It proves itself, and follows, as a necessary Inference, from the Premises. To reject it, is, to deny the christian Faith, and to commence Infidel. To profess to teach that Faith, and not to explain this doctrine, with the utmost perspicuity, and diligence, is

Proposition 7.

The Effects, or Evidences, of our being really in a justified State, are, all the Fruits of evangelical Righteousness, and true Holiness.

The proofs for this are too numerous for reference: they abound in all the Scriptures; particularly in our Saviour's memorable Sermon on the mount—in Rom. 12. —and, in 2 Pet. i. 5——11. I must observe, however, once more, that, *nothing* of this sort, of a truly christian cast, can ever be displayed, but in consequence of a vital and spiritual Union to Christ. John xv. 4*.

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to be a Traitor to the Cause of God, of Truth, and the essential Happiness of immortal Souls: and, to derive any secular Emoluments from such treachery, will only aggravate guilt, and increase condemnation.

* All these Propositions, it may be thought, are advanced with a considerable degree of Confidence. The Writer however presumes not to arrogate any dominion over the judgment of others. His is the confidence of

To arrange all this in a catechetical mode—that every thing may be done, to render it transparent to the most unlearned

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firm Conviction—the Result of patient, anxious, persevering Enquiry: and, should he have been mistaken—for, *humanum est, errare*—he is very ready to beg pardon of GOD, and MAN, for the liberty he has used. At present, it appears to him most egregiously unadvised, insolent, and impious, for any person to assume the responsible office of a public Teacher of Christianity, who does not proclaim these Doctrines, *in their due Order*, and in so distinct and lucid a manner, that the meanest of his hearers may comprehend him—if indeed they are so disposed. In his comparative view of the different degrees of atrocity, this, he apprehends to be one of the most alarming, and fatal. Luke vi. 39.

As to the trite and idle objections, which are continually raised against these Doctrines of Grace, by Pride, Ignorance, and the most shameful Prejudice, how often shall it be necessary to repeat, what has been said a thousand times, that, though there are neither limits, nor conditions, upon which the pardoning, justifying, and saving Grace of God are suspended, yet, he never bestows it without Repentance, Faith, and Holiness: they are "Things, which always *accompany* Salvation—" as the Scriptures express it; but, they are as much the *Gifts* of divine Goodness, and the *Grants* of unmerited Favour, as Heaven itself. The *Whole* of Salvation, and therefore, *a fortiori*, to speak logically, every inclusive part, is altogether of *Grace*.

—would be to say, What is the original, eternal, and primary Cause of Justification? The free Grace of God. And, what is the mediatorial Cause? The imputed Righteousness of Christ. And, what is the recipient, instrumental Cause? Faith. And, how do we come by that Faith? It is the special Gift of God. And, what are the Fruits, or Evidences, of that Faith? Good Works. And, through whom are all these Blessings communicated to us? and from whom must they be received—according to the sovereign and irreversible Appointment of Heaven? From Christ Jesus. "HE is Lord of all. For, it hath pleased the Father, that in HIM should all Fulness dwell." Col. i. 14——20 *.

* Proofs. Matt. xi. 27——30. . . . John iii. 35. . . . Gal. iii. 24——29. . . . Eph. i. 22, 23. . . . iv. 7——16. . . . v. 25——28. . . . Philip. ii. 9——11. . . . Col. i. 16——20, 28. . . ii. 3——10. Our Religion is therefore called, *Christianity*—from Christ: because, all its *Doctrines* lead to Him; all its *Promises* are fulfilled in Him; and all its *Blessings* flow from him.—It hath pleased the Father, that thus it should be: but, it does

This however is so little known, or noticed, in the many modern publications, which profess to treat of the christian Verity, that, adoring as I do, both the Wisdom and the Goodness of this divine Constitution, I may be permitted to digest it a little more in detail. For, though mine is but a Miniature, I would wish it to be a striking likeness of the Original*.

You acknowledge then, with me, that one of the inestimable blessings held out to us, in the glorious Gospel, is that of, REDEMPTION. The leading Feature in Christianity, is, that it is a Religion of Redemption, and not, as some have

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not please *you:* why then, you may talk of your Reason, your Philosophy, your Virtue, your Morality, or your Holiness; but, are you not, *in fact*, an Enemy to the Designs, Determinations, and Will of God? Let our Repugnancy thereto be ever so obstinate, and pertinacious, he will pursue his own Plans, and finally accomplish his invariable Purposes, "working all things after the Counsel of *his own Will.*" Eph. i. 5, 9, 11.

* The Χαρακτηρ, Imago expressa, if not the Απαυγασμα, Refulgentia, of the Model, after which I am copying.

grossly misrepresented it, a mere System of Ethics—of sublime Morality, and Virtue—of which, the Son of God was a spotless Example; but, of Redemption from the guilt of Sin—from the curse of a violated Law—and from the wrath of a justly offended God *.

* How is this expressed by another Writer—and one, who disdains to tread in the *modern* track of Apostacy from the doctrines of divine Grace? His words are these—" The magnificent and divine Undertaking of Jesus Christ is, to receive with open arms all of humankind, in all ages, who, conscious of their guilt and corruption, only apply to *Him* for Pardon, Peace, and Purification: to exempt them *immediately*, and *for ever*, from most exquisite and eternal punishment, the just doom of Sin: to adorn and fill them with all moral beauty and excellence—here, *initially*; hereafter, *perfectly:* to transmute all the afflictions of this life into blessings: to bestow upon them the liberty and dignity of serving God in all the offices of Religion, and in all the good Works attached to their several stations and relations of life: to restore their bodies from the grave, and to crown them with ineffable youth, lustre, and glory: to exalt them to the beatific presence of God around his throne: to fix them immutably in the region of Bliss, and Goodness: and there to *eternize* them in intimate union and plenary communion with the all-sufficient and inexhaustible DEITY himself."

For this Redemption, where must we look? and, to whom must we betake ourselves? That I may not be suspected of

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Disregarding therefore all the low, mean, wretched, beggarly opinions of those, who would reduce this great Redemption to what they call a *rational*, that is, in disguise, a *human* Standard—learn to take your ideas of it from its infinitely wise Author himself: and he will tell you, that it is a *free*—a *plenteous*—and an *eternal* Redemption. Rom. iii. 24. . . . . Ps. cxxx. 7. . . . . Hebr. ix. 11, 12.

One of our very justly admired Poets seems to have penned the following lines under the most happy impression of the value, and glory, of this Redemption.

" And what is this?—Survey the wond'rous Cure;
" And at each step let higher wonder rise.
" Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
" Through Means, that speak its value infinite!
" A pardon bought with Blood! with blood divine!
" With blood divine of Him I made my Foe!
" Persisted to provoke! though woo'd, and aw'd—
" Blest, and chastis'd—a flagrant Rebel still!
" A rebel, 'midst the thunders of his Throne!
" Nor I alone—a rebel Universe—
" My Species up in arms! not one exempt!
" Yet, for the foulest of the foul, *he dies!*
" Most joy'd, for the redeem'd from greatest guilt!
" As if our Race were held of highest rank—
" And Godhead dearer as more kind to Man!
" Bound ev'ry heart; and ev'ry bosom, burn!
" O what *A Scale of Miracles* is here!"

imposing either upon your ignorance, or your idleness; let me intreat you would make use of your own eyes, and understanding; and turn to the following passages for a reply, upon which you may safely depend. "Prove all things; and then, hold fast that, which is good. Luke i. 68——79.... ii. 38.... Rom. iii. 24.... Col. i. 14.... Hebr. ix. 12."

Another Benefit, proposed to our most serious consideration in the christian Plan, is, *The Forgiveness of Sin:* which is stated to us in all the variety of prefiguration, prophecy, and promise: and, as Sin is the fruitful Source of all our misery, upon every principle of Self-love we should be extremely anxious to learn how the perfect Remission of it is to be obtained: and

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Is this a just survey of the nature, extent, and wonders, of *The christian Redemption?* And, have you never contemplated these unsearchable treasures of the divine *Mercy*, *Love*, and *Grace?* What blackness of ingratitude, and guilt!

this is written in characters so legible, that whoso runneth may read. All The Scriptures direct us to Christ—to his Sacrifice, Atonement, and Intercession—for this purpose: and not for this purpose only; but, for that Repentance unto life, and salvation, which is inseparably connected with it: as when it is said, Acts xiii. 38. . . . Matt. xxvi. 28. . . . . Luke xxiv. 47. . . . . Acts x. 43. . . v. 31.

There is a Maxim laid down, by the same divine Authority, in terms so very explicit, unqualified, and intelligible, that, it is astonishing to think, how little it is generally regarded. We are assured, that, "If any man have not *The Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his." No degree of Rank, Learning, Opulence, Respectability, Estimation, Virtue, or Morals, can supply this defect, in the christian Character. Weigh this declaration in your own mind. Examine it thoroughly. To treat it lightly, is to sport with your own ruin: and, is that a trifle?

But, if the christian Character can never be supported without the supernatural influence and agency of this holy Spirit, how is it to be obtained? The Answer is as easy, as the Question is important. It is, through the Mediation of Jesus Christ. Gal. iii. 13, 14. . . . . iv. 4——7. . . . Eph. i. 13, 14.

Are we to reckon, among the numerous Mercies, which are set before us in the Word of Truth, and Grace, *Reconciliation to God—Acceptance into his Favour—The Adoption of Children—spiritual Liberty — Sanctification — Peace—Hope — Joy — Safety*—and, *an eternal Inheritance?* That these are all of them Mercies of the highest class, which far exceed all adequate celebration, will not be controverted by the poorest disciple in the School of Christ: and, that they are among the unsearchable treasures, which are hid in HIM, is as certain *.

* Are they not expressly called "the unsearchable riches of *Christ*," in Eph. iii. 8? And does not this

Indeed, without any further enlargement on this delightful theme, I shall abridge, and comprise, all I might be

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perfectly harmonize with 2 Cor. viii. 9? They are therefore the riches of Christ, considered as the Messiah—or, as the one Mediator between God and Men: for, as such, they are deposited with him; they are bestowed through him; and they are secured by him. All the riches of Grace and Salvation are in his keeping, and, according to the tenor of the Covenant between the Father and the Son, at his disposal.

It should seem, from the manner in which St. Paul has expressed himself in this place, that, it is the *principal* duty—not to say the highest honour, and the chief delight—of every christian Minister, to *preach* those unsearchable riches; that they may be known—admired—sought—received—and enjoyed: and, that the greatest Saints are always the least, and lowest, in their own estimation.—Let any honest Mind consult only Luke ii. and then decide, whether they ought to be acknowledged as the public Teachers of our Religion, who do not exhibit Jesus Christ as *the Redemption* of Man—*the Consolation* of Israel—*the Salvation* of his people: and therefore as the grand Source of those "good tidings of great Joy," which the Angel announced to the wondering and affrighted shepherds. —See too, Luke i. 68——79. . . . iii. 5, 6. . . . iv. 16——21.

"O fairer far

"Than all thy wond'rous works! what Excellence

studious to add, in a single passage, of such extent, as will even more than sanction what I have already advanced. For, that the Redeemer and his Cross may be properly estimated, it will teach us, that we are indebted to Him, and to it, for *all* spiritual blessings. Let the reflecting Reader meditate upon it with Adoration, Love, and Gratitude. The passage, to

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" Bears thy similitude? Thy Father's image,
" The plenitude, the brightness of his Glory.
" The eloquence of Heav'n is far below
" Thy worth; for, Thou art infinite perfection,
" The fulness of the Godhead dwells in Thee.
" Thine is the Pow'r, the Kingdom, and the Grace;
" All, all is thine in the high heav'ns above,
" On earth, and in the deep.—May ev'ry tongue
" In blessing Thee, be blest; may blessings fall
" In torrents on their head, who plead thy Cause!
" Smile on their active piety, and zeal;
" Strengthen their hands, and fortify their hearts,
" With peace divine and holy consolation.
" Let them appear bright as the vig'rous Sun,
" When, tow'ring from his clear meridian height,
" He fills the spacious firmament with glory.
" From sea to sea be thy wide Empire spread,
" And let the utmost Isles THY NAME exalt!"

which I am labouring to excite his pious curiosity, is in Eph. i. 3——11*.

To present all this in another light, let me ask, In whom are we created anew, and transformed into the Image of God? through whom are we justified, and pardoned? by whom are we reconciled unto God? in whom are we sanctified? by whom are we strengthened, comforted, and preserved? in a word, who is both the *Author* and the *Finisher*, of Faith, and Salvation? How miserably blind must he be to the substance of the sacred Oracles, who knoweth not, that, in all these things, JESUS CHRIST is "the Alpha, and the Omega, the Beginning, and the End, the First, and the Last. 1 Cor. i. 18——31."

Now then, if all the divine Favours, whether they respect Energy, Privilege,

* How much would the Arranger of these serious Hints be gratified, could he persuade himself, that his Readers would be induced to take up their Bible, for the purpose of examining, *accurately*, what relation this passage bears to Jesus Christ, and the divine Grace.

or Blessing, are communicated to us in and through Christ Jesus, and in no other way—we may collect from hence the folly, the guilt, and the danger, of *Self-righteousness*; of placing *any* confidence in ourselves, or upon any works, conditions, or performances, of our own *. For, what

* I need not be reminded, that, " the terms or conditions of Salvation," is a phrase, which has been in frequent use among Divines, for a very considerable period; and, that some of them have laboured to defend it.—So much the worse. No time, no authority, however learned or respectable, can ever sanction what has the *smallest* tendency to subvert a principal Design of Heaven, or to sully, even in the *lowest* degree, the Glory of divine Grace. I contend, that it is, in so far, an attack upon the eternal Purposes of God. You may think this venial: I deem it impudently profane. Terms and Conditions of Salvation, instead of being the Divinity of THE BIBLE, are a Contradiction to the Freeness, the absolute Gratuitousness, with which it is conferred, and to the antecedent State of those, who are enabled to receive it. They are " *dead in Sin.*" If there be any thing like a stipulation, it is simply that of, Acceptance: and they must be *made willing* to accept it, by a divine agency. Ps. cx. 1——3. Eph. i. 6.

WHO is it, that says all this? No matter: the poorest, meanest, lowest Reptile, that crawls the earth. What

is the evil of such a temper and conduct? It consists in this. As it implies a most deplorable and wilful Ignorance of God, and his Will, his Law, and his Gospel, it is also an Act of Injustice, and Ingratitude, to the Redeemer, and a virtual Rejection of his mediatorial Undertaking, Righteousness, Grace, and Salvation *. We may be assured, that such a Disposition will never be encouraged, by those, who mean to be cloathed with Humility,

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then? Is it *Truth?* The Shepherd of Salisbury plain might know more of *that*, than many a learned Rabbi, and profound Philosopher. Is. xlii. 16.

* The arithmetical proportion of those, who enter their serious Protest against *Unrighteousness*, to those, who are at all alarmed at *Self-righteousness*, is much greater than that of an hundred to one! And yet, upon a Scripture Estimate, it is a question, whether the quantity of moral Evil, in the latter, be not more, than that in any species of the former. How do you understand, Matt. xxi. 28——32? Certain it is, that, every Act of *Self-righteousness* is a composition of *wilful Ignorance*, *Injustice*, *Ingratitude*, *Pride*, and *Infidelity!* and, can any thing be more fatal and dangerous than such a Temper, allowed—defended—and indulged? But, what more common? We meet with it in almost every step we take through life!

and who do not positively prefer the principles of their own Reason, Conceit, Prejudice, and Pride, to the manifest though abasing dictates of the Word of Inspiration. If it be at all necessary, to err in either extreme, where is the Prudence, or the Modesty, that would not chuse rather to err on the side of Self-abhorrence, than on that of Self-exaltation? Luke xviii. 9——14*.

* Is it not amazing, that, after the Son of God has drawn the Character of *spiritual Pride* in such strong and odious Colours, his professed Disciples should pay so little attention to the instructive warning it holds out to us? Have you never seriously contemplated this Character in the person of the self-applauding Pharisee?

" Whose Virtues were his Pride: and that one Vice
" Made all his Virtues gewgaws of no price:
" He wore them, as fine trappings, for a show;
" A praying Synagogue-frequenting Beau.
" His Works, his Abstinence, his Zeal allow'd,
" You think him pious;—God accounts him proud:
" Of all his Conduct, this the genuine sense;
" High in Conceit, though lowly in pretence:
" Though not a Grace appears on strictest search;
" But, that he vaunts—pays tythes—and goes to Church."

It may be seen too, from *the Assertion* we have now established, why it is, that the ministerial Office is so repeatedly expressed by "*preaching Christ*;" and why his great Apostle "determined to know nothing, save *Jesus Christ*, and him crucified." The reason is obvious. For, HE is the grand central Point, from which all the rays of divine Truth may be said to diverge. Were we to animadvert on the eternal *Purposes* of God, so far as they are revealed to us, they all rest in him; on the *Prefigurations* of the ceremonial œconomy, they all point to him; on the *Prophecies* of the old Testament, they are fulfilled in him: on the *Promises* of the new, they are accomplished through him. All the *Principles*, all the *Profession*, and all the *Practice* of Christianity, tend to rivet our Minds to this glorious and wonderful object,

"THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS *."

* The national Church has asserted, that we are *by nature*, and in consequence of *original corruption*, "very far

To prove—as we hope we have done—that all the divine Blessings are conveyed to us through this Medium, or Channel, is indirectly to shew cause, why the christian Life is called "a living by Faith, and by the Faith of the Son of God. Gal. ii. 20. For, what is the *habit* of Faith, but that, of unceasing application to Christ, in the use of the instituted Means, or Ordinances "that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace, and Strength, to help in every time of need. Hebr. iv. 14——16.

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gone," quàm longissimè, "from original Righteousness:" and the Gospel of the Grace of God assures us, that all our Righteousness, in every possible view of it, must be derived from Christ; "who of God is made unto us *Wisdom*, and *Righteousness*, and *Sanctification*, and *Redemption*."—What then, is there nothing left for us to glory in? no virtue, no goodness, no excellence? Nothing—according to the divine Constitution: in which every thing is so *ordered*, that, "according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him *glory in the Lord*." This is the irrevocable Decree of HEAVEN—however the Pride of Reason, Learning, Philosophy, and Self-righteousness, may dare to oppose it. "The Word of our God shall *stand*, for ever." 2 Cor. v. 20, 21.

I shall only subjoin one additional hint, which this moment occurs to me, as a general Inference from the whole. We hear, we read, and we converse, about *true Happiness:* but, what is it? and, who enjoys it? The Man of Pleasure? No. The Man of Wealth? No. The Man of Honour? No. The Man of the World—surrounded, though he may be, with all the Sources of earthly Felicity? No. Who then? The Man, who is "blessed with all *spiritual* Blessings in Christ Jesus." 1 John v. 9——12.

"Learn hence what honours, what louds Pæans, due
"To those, who push our antidote aside;
"Those boasted friends to Reason, and to Man,
"Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves
"Death's terror, heighten'd, gnawing on his heart;
"Those pompous Sons of Reason idoliz'd,
"And vilify'd at once; of Reason dead,
"Then deify'd—as Monarchs were of old.
"What conduct plants proud Laurels on their brow?
"While love of Truth through all their camp resounds,
"They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
"Spike up their inch of Reason, on the point
"Of philosophic wit, call'd argument;
"And then, exulting in their Taper, cry,
"Behold the Sun!" and, Indian-like, adore!—

" A CHRISTIAN is the highest stile of Man*.
" With aspect mild, and elevated eye,

* According to the doctrine here laid down—and we have proved its authority to be divine—no person can with any propriety, or truth, consider himself *a Christian*, who is not actually and constantly applying to Christ—trusting in him—and adhering to him, for *every* purpose of present, and of everlasting Salvation. This is the Constitution of Heaven. Ps. 2. . . . Follow *Reason*—if you would be thought a *rational* Being: follow Religion—if you mean to be a *religious* Character: follow *Christianity*—if you aim to be *a Christian*. " This is the only Station, or Summit, of *Truth*, *Excellence*, and *Good*, elevated, clear, and serene; from which you may calmly and safely look down, and take a prospect of the wanderings, mists, and tempests, in the Vale of *Error*, *Vice*, and *Misery* below."

Christianity, we know, is a complex term—including in it every distinct article of our most holy Faith: with which we ought to be intimately acquainted: and, in order to take the best possible view of an entire Circle, we should place ourselves in the Center. Jesus Christ himself, it has been repeatedly demonstrated, is THE CENTER of this " great Mystery of Godliness;" and every Point in the whole Circumference looks, if I may be permitted the term, towards HIM. The whole Scripture directs our attention to Him: he is the Sum and Scope of it. Take him away from it, and its vital Principle is gone. He is the Substance, Source, and Spirit, of the Religion it reveals. All the great Movements of the providential History of the world relate to him. " He is the Head *over all things* to his Church." And, He is expressly said to be the final Recapitulation of all things.

" Behold him seated on a mount serene,
" Above the fogs of Sense, and Passion's storm;
" All the black cares, and tumults of this life
" Excite his pity, nor impair his Peace.
" Earth's genuine sons, the scepter'd and the slave,
" A mingled mob! a wand'ring herd! he sees
" Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike!
" His full reverse in all! What higher praise?
" What stronger demonstration of the right?"

This is a grand Idea of the Person of the Son of God: and all his *Friends* will rejoice that he should be thus exalted. It is indeed no more than justice: for, after all, that can be conceived of his Glory, it will far exceed. If any powers of language could reach such a subject, so transcendent, as this, it might perhaps be that, with which the great Rollin has so admirably finished his Ancient History. But here, all human Wisdom and Eloquence must be for ever lost in *Wonder*, *Love*, and *Praise*. Ο δε ευδαιμων πρωτον μεν εθαυμασιν, επειτα δε ερωτα εσχε τη καταμαθειν οποσα θνητη φυσει δυνατα.

ASSERTION 9.

It is a principal Design of the Godhead, in the Œconomy of Redemption, to shew forth the exceeding riches of his Grace.

Cum per GRATIAM Dei christiani simus, ejusque Doctrina sana sit dos Ecclesiæ eximia, ejusque hæreditas, inimicis CHRISTI et nominis christiani meritò annumerandi sunt, quotquot plus hominibus quam Deo student, et hominum *voluntati*, quam *divinæ Gratiæ!*

" Yet half mankind maintain an impious strife
" With him, THE DONOR of eternal life,
" Because the deed, by which his GRACE confirms
" The largess he bestows, prescribes no Terms.
" Compliance with his Will your lot insures;
" *Accept it only*—and *the Boon* is yours:
" And sure it is as kind, to *smile*, and *give*,
" As with a frown to say, " Do this, and live."
" Love is not pedlar's trump'ry—bought, and sold:
" He *will* give *freely*—or, he will withhold.
" His Soul abhors a mercenary thought—
" And him as deeply, who abhors it not.
" He stipulates indeed—but, merely this,
" That man will *freely take* an *unbought* bliss;
" Will trust him for a faithful gen'rous part,
" Nor set a price upon a willing heart.
" Of all the ways, that seem to promise fair,
" To place you where his Saints his presence share,
" *This only can*—for this plain cause, express'd
" In words as plain; *Himself has shut the rest.*
" But, oh! the contest, discord and debate,
" The tidings of *unpurchas'd* Heav'n create! *"

* See this, in more than one half the polemical Controversies, which have been the disgrace of our Religion;

In the solitary musings of my life—and they are not only frequent, but, from a remarkable peculiarity of situation, almost without intermission—I have been often led to exclaim, with much surprise, "What can be the reason, that, though we are encompassed with public Teachers of Religion, so little is said about *divine Grace!* Numberless are the discourses, treatises, essays, and disquisitions, on Virtue, Morality, Goodness, and the like: but, how seldom is our attention invited to this transcendent Theme! Is it forbidden in the sacred Writings, ever to agitate it? or, has it no share at all in the

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and, instead of being calculated to disseminate christian Truth, have been much more likely, both in Matter and Manner, to gratify its Enemies. *Tantæne animis cœlestibus Iræ?*

The Arranger of these biblical hints had originally a thought of inscribing them, particularly, to some of the most respectable Controvertialists of the day; but, upon maturer reflection, and dreading the malignity of Tongues, and Pens, he presumes, that he has determined more wisely—by addressing them to the attention of the Publick, at large.

scheme of that Redemption—at the very sound of which every heart should glow, and every bosom burn? Is it of no importance in this, the supreme Good of every immortal Being—or, is it only of secondary concern? or, is it, that our Instructors do not derive their ideas of Christianity from the pure Fountain of unerring Truth?"

Much it is to be feared, that this is the case. Otherwise, is there one among them, who would carry the hardihood of his Profanity to such an excess, as to maintain, that this is not the most prominent feature of our Religion? That it is so, is what I now pledge myself to defend, and confirm, as sanctioned by sacred Authority *.

* "When one reckons without Providence," said a lively Writer, in allusion to some temporal concern, "we must frequently reckon over again:" and, if we reckon, in much higher concerns, without *divine Grace*, our moral Arithmetic is not only as incorrect, but more fatal. For my own part, though I wish to say it under the correction of minds better informed, and more enlightened, in these

Come forward then, my Man of reason, philosophy, and unwearied research

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high matters, I cannot at present conceive it possible for any man sincerely and cordially to have entered into *The principal design* of God in the grand scheme of Redemption by Jesus Christ, who is not *anxious* to have the *exceeding* riches of his GRACE exalted to the utmost in the eyes of men. But, he must have made a very curious discovery, who professes to do this, et non statuit non posse hominem sine speciali Dei gratiâ aliquid velle aut facere in iis rebus, quæ ad pietatem et salutem pertinent: non posse hominem propriis viribus ad gratiam se disponere, sive aliquid facere propter quod ei divina gratia conferatur: ac demum, nihil agere posse cujus causâ Deus illi gratiam dare dicatur.

Nos igitur ex verbo Dei demonstramus in homine nullam esse ad bonum Libertatem, antè effulgeat salutaris Gratiæ irradiatio. Quia est servus peccati, Rom. vi. 20. cui peccatum dominatur, 2, et 14. sistitque membra sua serva impuritati et transgressioni legis εις ανομιαν, 19. quiaque liber est, id est, expers justitiæ, 20. a Diabolo devictus, facitque quod principi illi placet, et in quem efficacissime operatur, Eph. ii. 2. et in libertatem asseri non potest, nisi assertore CHRISTO, et vindice GRATIA salutari, Joh viii. 39. *Talis est homo lapsus.*

Very great stress has been laid, and argued with much ingenuity, on a certain distinction between the natural and moral Inability of man: it is sufficient however for our purpose, to have shewn from the Scriptures, that his

into all the different ramifications of human Science—both ancient, and modern; profoundly learned, in all that has given name, and celebrity, to the Priests, the Sages, and the Poets, of Egypt, Greece,

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Inability is real, wilful, and fatal; or such, as utterly to incapacitate him to save himself in any degree; and to prove, that, if ever he be saved, he must be indebted entirely to the exceeding riches of the divine Grace in Christ Jesus. We are imposed upon, duped, and blinded, by those who preach any other doctrine Therefore, beware of false Prophets—whether they appear in the garb of rational Christianity, philosophic Pretensions, or self-righteous Virtue. Plausible as they seem, they are nothing but the wiles, the devices, and the depths of Satan, in so many different forms; which this Proteus can assume, to disguise and dishonour the truth of God. We may trifle, and sport with these delusions, for a little while; but those, who mean us best, will charge us to look to the eternal consequence of such folly. Unless therefore we have resolved to treat Grace and Salvation as trivial concerns, we must be continually on our guard against every Deceiver. For, we are surrounded with them. Man, however, is so strange a Being, that, in the very article, in which he should be most cautious, he is the least apprehensive; and, instead of indulging a wise suspicion, he chuses to live in error; nor are there wanting Teachers, who sooth him in it. Jer. v. 30, 31... vi. 13, 14.... Ezek. iii. 17——19.

and Rome; and, tell me, what is the meaning of language, if THE GRACE of God be not the very Line of life in our Redemption.

Know you not—what it behoves us most to know—that Characters of genius, learning, and piety, scarcely to be exceeded, have done honour to their unrivalled endowments, by arguing, on the most extensive scale, and with admirable beauty of illustration, that, all the divine Attributes and Perfections are no where exhibited to us with such glory, as in the Person, Offices, and Undertaking, of our great Redeemer? Let me insure your Candour, and I will make my humble effort towards something of the same kind, after their manner—though in a very concise sketch.

To begin then with that Perfection, which is the beauty and felicity of his Nature—the HOLINESS of God; which

determines him to love every thing that is pure, and excellent, with a boundless affection; and, to pursue every thing, that is opposite to it, with an infinite hatred. Much of this is to be seen in the numberless evils, which are ever following in the train of Sin; more, in the Wrath of God, which is revealed from heaven against it; but, most of all, in the sufferings and sacrifice of the Son of God. Who can possibly contemplate this wondrous transaction, in the spirit of Faith, without crying, with grateful Adoration, and penitential Humility, "*holy, holy, holy*, is the Lord of hosts!"

The immutability of the divine JUSTICE —which, notwithstanding it is so shamefully disregarded, not to say insulted, by those who chuse to misconceive him, as a Being, who is all Mercy—is written in characters, as legible, on the Cross of Christ. Why indeed did he submit to that *extreme* of humiliation, and woe, but to satisfy, as

well as to proclaim, this attribute of the Godhead? "that he might be just, as well as the Justifier of him, that believeth in Jesus; a just God, and a Saviour *."

* "It is certain, that, whoever believes that the eternal Son of God underwent the most grievous sufferings—for which no sufficient reason can be assigned, but that they were to expiate the sins of mankind—must be convinced, that there is in *Sin*, or *moral Evil*, something of *malignity*, and contrariety to the divine Nature, Will, and Government, beyond what the most refined mere Moralists are willing to admit; and which, it was necessary to remove, before a way could be made for the exercise of Mercy to the transgressors of God's Law. A God, all mercy, is a God *unjust*."—The whole epistle to the Hebrews should be read under this conviction.

How is it possible for any thing but a learned Sophist, steept in the arts of Subtilty and Evasion, not to discover the following obvious Truths in that invaluable and compendious Treasure? Christus Sacerdos est propriè dictus. . . . Christo tribuendum quicquid Typis ejus adumbratur . . . Christi sacrificium circa Deum versatur . . . Christi sacrificium ad genus piaculare pertinet. . . . Christus in sacrificio suo triplicem rationem habuit—Offerentis, Victimæ, et Pontificis. . . . Christi Mors pœnæ vicariæ rationem habuit. . . . Christus pro nobis intercedit, et nos ac nostra Deo commendat. . . . Factum est igitur, ut ipse Deus filium suum, quem sibi unice charum habuit, victimam pro peccatis nostris piacularem fieri vellet, et instituit, eorumque a se remis-

That the POWER of the Deity was manifested in the same Object, and in the Religion he came to establish on earth, is sufficiently evident from the whole history of Christ; in the variety of Miracles, he performed; and in the otherwise unaccountable Propagation of Christianity—considering the insignificance of the Persons, and the Means, made use of, for that purpose; together with the violent, cruel, and universal Resistance, they had to contend with.

Is it not equally evident, that the TRUTH, or VERACITY, of the most High, was as fully displayed in the person of THE MESSIAH? Can we study this marvellous Character, as it becomes us to do, without observing, that, in him, the moral

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sionem pœnâ ejus vicariâ impetrari. Ex quo et illud intelligitur, nihil habuisse mortem Christi quod Dei GRATIA repugnavit. Siquidem GRATIA ejus fieret, ut Christus pro nobis moreretur, ac quidem ut illius mors ad peccatorum remissionem, vitamque eternam nobis valeat. Rom. iii. 23——26.

Governour of the world has proved himself invariably true to the requisitions of his Law; that, in him, all the Shadows of the levitical dispensation are substantiated, and realized; and that, in him, all the ancient Prophecies, and Promises, respecting the Salvation of Man, are fulfilled? Matt. v. 17, 18. John i. 17. . . 1 Pet. i. 10——12.

As to the WISDOM of Jehovah, Jesus Christ is the very Speculum, or Mirrour, in which it is most surprisingly exhibited. It may be viewed indeed in all the countless works of Creation; and in all the general movements of Providence; but, Christianity, rightly understood, is emphatically, and supereminently, "The Wisdom of God;" so that, "unto the principalities and powers of Heaven is made known by the Church *the manifold Wisdom* of God—* according to the eter-

* Πολυποικιλος σοφια· Magna et admirabili Varietate distincta, quæ nunquam exhauriri potest. Non simpliciter ποικιλος, varia dixit, sed πολυποικιλος, vehementer varia.—Chrysost.

nal Purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. iii. 10, 11.

With great ability, excellence, and usefulness, have many devout and learned Authors enlarged on each of these sublime and interesting particulars; which ought to be deeply digested; but, our attention is more immediately called to the meditation of those glories, which are as much calculated to attach the Heart, as they are to instruct the Mind; to win the Soul, as to enlighten the Understanding. For, what a degenerate Insensible must he be, who can listen to the most illustrious and astonishing displays of the divine MERCY, KINDNESS, LOVE, and GRACE, without any suitable emotions of admiration, delight, and gratitude! Ps. cvii. 1, 8, 43.

Here then we propose to dwell a little, with intellectual fixedness, on those most inviting and consolatory perfections of the Divinity; that we may receive the

transforming rays of his Glory, beaming upon our Spirits from "the Face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iv. 3——6. . . . iii. 18.

Of the MERCY of the most High, it is impossible for us to entertain such ideas as the Scriptures inspire, unless we consider it as shewn to creatures, who are sinful—guilty—and miserable; not merely undeserving, but, whose offences are so multiplied, as to render them liable to the avenging and endless indignation of God. With such sentiments, we shall see why this divine Attribute is so highly exalted in all the sacred pages; and we shall most cordially unite in their strains. Ps. cxxxvi. We shall see Mercy inscribed upon every the lowest token of his Favour, and Goodness; upon all the blessings of this life; but, above all, upon that inestimable manifestation of it in the Redemption of the world *.

* See Luke i. 72, 78. . . . Rom. ix. 15, 16, 23. xv. 9. . . . Eph. ii. 4. . . . Tit. iii. 5. . . . 1 Pet. i. 3. . . . ii. 10. . . Jude 21.

The LOVE of God may be represented as that particular Glory of the Godhead, which inclines and induces him to do good, to the various Beings, which he has brought into a state of existence, according to their respective natures and capacities—which are ineffably diversified. But, here again, it is of material consequence, that we preserve the most accurate distinction, between his Love of Benevolence, and his Love of Complacence: for, they only are the happy subjects of the latter, who are personally acquainted with his regenerating Mercy, and Grace.

Never, therefore, can we possibly have just conceptions of the redeeming Love of God, till we have been impressed with a conviction, that we are, by nature, "dead in trespasses and sins;" and that, in those very circumstances, of original Depravity, moral Corruption, and helpless Misery, a compassionating "God, for his great Love, wherewith he loved us—and, "*not* for

works of righteousness, which we had done," or conditions which we had performed—" *even when* we were dead in sins," and of his own sovereign Will and Pleasure, restored us to spiritual Light, and Life. Eph. ii. 4, 5*.

The greek word, which is adopted in the holy Oracles, to express the KINDNESS of the Godhead, in this instance, and that nothing may be introduced, to obscure the splendour, the brightness, the blaze, of his Mercy, and his Love, should be interpreted to signify the spontaneous, the unsolicited, the unexpected, sweetness of his Benignity. For, no language short of this, to avoid circumlocution, can, I think, convey the true meaning of, Χρηστοτης. Herein consists the superlative Excellency of the Loving-kindness of God, which is said to be " better than Life itself." For, what is Life, without it? Tit. iii. 3——7.

* See too, Rom. v. 6——8, 10.

Having taken this cursory glance at the Mercy, the Love, and the Kindness, of the divine Being, which are projecting Figures in the grand Picture, we are now sketching, we come at length to the most prominent—his GRACE: which, after deliberate consideration, I am compelled to suppose, must be intended to point out to us *the absolute and unqualified Freeness* of his Mercy, his Kindness, and his Love, to those, upon whom they are fixed*.

For, to what, as the eternal Fountain of our Redemption, shall we dare to ascribe it, but to the *gratuitous* Bounty of

* This is indisputably the primary idea of the word, Χαρις: which is made use of, to signify the highest degree of *gratuitous* Beneficence, of which any Being is capable; where there is no virtuous inducement to excite it, but, every thing the reverse. In this peculiar sense it is evidently applied by the Saviour himself, in Luke vi. 32—— 36. There indeed it is rendered, "*Thank:*" which conveys hardly any distinct idea—neither *the letter*, nor *the spirit*, of that most sublime and disinterested Generosity, which flows *perfectly free*—though there might be enough in the wretched Objects of it for ever to stop its liberal Current.

Heaven? to what, the various Streams of spiritual blessedness, which flow from that Fountain? and to what, that Ocean of peace and glory, in which they shall finally and for ever terminate—but to the unmerited GRACE of God? If we are justified, is it not an Act of Grace? If we are glorified, is it not an Act of Grace?

Some indeed there are, who chuse to have their abode in the regions of Darkness! They prefer the dreary gloom and obscurity of ancient Heathenism! They will blink, like the Owl, at the Sun of Revelation, which they abhor—and tell you, with Epictetus, that the Philosopher expects every thing εξ εαυτε, "from himself;" or, with Aristotle, that nothing more is necessary, than to act κατα λογον, "according to Reason:" and so, the Pride of philosophy will teach every man to prate, if he has resolved to follow no other Guide: but, without any discredit to right Rea-

son, and sound Philosophy, we believe, and conclude, that, Hoc piarum mentium est, ut nihil sibi tribuant, sed *totum* Dei gratiæ; "it is the genius, and characteristick, of pious Minds, to attribute nothing to themselves, but every thing to divine Grace*."

Neither must we stop here. For, what use do we make of our eyes, or of our Intellect, if we are not led to celebrate "*the Riches*" of this Grace? To those, who know its value, all language, and all time, will be utterly insufficient to speak its worth. We may retire, for that purpose, from every sublunary avocation, and concern; we may call up all our mental energies; and, which is still more requisite, and beneficial, we may supplicate almighty Aid, to illuminate and enlarge

* Christian Theology is not the Reason of Epictetus, of Plato, of Aristotle, or of any other mere Philosopher, ancient or modern; but, it is the supreme, the sovereign, the infallible Reason of Heaven itself—

Θεϖ Λογος.

our views of this exhaustless theme—but, we may as well imagine, that the optic powers of a scarcely visible insect can grasp our planetary System, as that we can fully comprehend the treasures of redeeming Mercy, and Love. Such is their incomparable Value, their unlimited Extent, their everlasting Duration! This is one of the topics, in which we are necessitated to labour for expression; and, the more we labour, the more we sigh over its poverty.

Innumerable are the pursuits of human Science, and Literature, which exceed our utmost investigation. Very soon, to our mortification, do we find, that we have arrived at our *ne plus ultra*—"hitherto shalt thou go, but no further." How much more may it be presumed, that this will be the case in infinitely higher matters! For, "canst thou by searching find out God? It is as high as Heaven—what canst thou do?"—Or, "canst thou

fathom his profound of Love to Man?" What! comprehend an "height and depth, a length, and breadth, which surpasseth knowledge?"—Canst thou trace the mysterious footsteps of his Providence, through the trackless Sea, in which they lie concealed from mortal ken? "Not deeply to discern, nor much to know; Mankind was born, to wonder, and adore." The Nature, the Glories, the Judgments, and the Ways of God, are all unsearchable. Rom. xi. 33——36.

Nor are "the riches of his Grace" less so. They too are "*unsearchable.*" O the depth of this unfathomable Ocean! We may talk of them; we may think of them; and we may indulge all the innocent luxury of Imagination, without any restraint: for, even then, they will far exceed. Not all the Tongues of Men, and of Angels, in happy concert, could adequately describe to us "the *exceeding* riches of his Grace!" Surely, if there be

what is called any Reason or Fitness in things, is it not most reasonable, and fit, that we should be for ever digging in such a Mine?

What then must be the state of those public Teachers—should there be any such among us—who are blind to its Treasures? who are dumb in its Praise? who are afraid to have it sprung? who detest the Labourers, that are working at it? who wish to have it concealed? and, who hold up its most zealous Panegyrists, to ridicule, to shame, to contempt! *.

Eternal Father of Mercies! and thou Saviour and Friend of Man! are these thy commissioned Ambassadors? these, the

* Is not this almost universally the case? and, could we not produce five hundred Discourses of some celebrity, published within the last thirty years, in which these Treasures are *scarcely noticed?* What an Apostacy is this from genuine Christianity! and, if this be a Religion of divine Origin, what avenging Visitations may we not shortly expect from its insulted Author! To me, they seem approaching with rapid strides.

Heralds of thy Gospel? these, the Proclaimers of thy Truth—thy faithful Servants—"the Messengers of the Churches—and, *The Glory of Christ?*"—If so—forgive the most insignificant of all thy intellectual creatures, this feeble Effort, to explore, and to exalt, the unimaginable riches of thy GRACE!

But, if it be otherwise; if it be indeed *the Design*, and a *principal* Design, of the most high God, in the œconomy of Redemption, "to shew forth his GRACE *—

* The original, says a great Critic, is of much greater force than our translation; "that he might shew it forth with demonstration and evidence—that so the World might see, admire, and applaud, the bounty of his Grace." Evidentèr et multò manifestissimè demonstrat, vultque Deus ab omnibus animadverti. Ενδεικνυμι notat, satis manifestè et dilucidè declarare, ita ut omnibus res appareat, ac negari vel occultari nequeat.

I have been peeping into some of our Commentators, of the highest reputation for *Learning*—and, would you believe it possible? so much are *they* affected with this supereminent and wonderful display of the divine Grace, in the grand Scheme of Redemption, that they have not offered a single remark upon it! Let christian Charity

the *riches* of his Grace—the *exceeding* riches of his *Grace*—in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus;" shall I profess myself a Believer in his Revelation, and will you deem yourself an Instructor of the ignorant, without any pious Ardour, to enter into that design, and to promote it upon earth? Let us honourably disclaim all pretensions to the Religion of divine Grace, if it be not our study, ambition, and delight, to extol the Grace of that Religion. How can we be supposed to possess that Religion, if we do not breathe this Spirit!

Conscious—as I ought to be—of "the winter in my strain," and of the very little glory I have been able to render to so immortal a Source of Faith, and Hope, and Peace; knowing, that the decorations of my Eloquence can no more recommend,

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suppose, that they thought the passage *above* all criticism, and all praise—and that no human tongue, of Erudition or Eloquence, was equal to its celebration.

than they can disguise, the simplicity of Truth, I blush for my deficiencies; and can only lament, that such a Cause cannot always find a more able Advocate. I have one Consolation however left; 2 Cor. viii. 12*.

* "I own the glorious Theme has fir'd my breast"—and given it all the little animation, of which a most brittle frame is susceptible: and, amply shall I be rewarded, if, in striking this Master-string of divine Revelation, I shall have awakened the attention of but a few to its enchanting tones. For, though so much has been offered on the subject,

"Almighty GRACE, thou great exhaustless Theme,
"What eloquence of Man can talk of thee?
"What thought has fathom'd thy eternal depths,
"Or measur'd out thy lengths? What Angel's wing
"Has reach'd thy heights? What Seraph's flowing song,
"In all the pow'rs of heav'nly harmony
"Can paint thy charms, and to the ravish'd soul
"Unfold thy beauties in their native light?
"For, O! what bounds has Kindness infinite?
"What limits shall his wond'rous Grace confine—
"Who works in all things as his Counsel guides,
"Mov'd by his own Benignity—the Spring,
"The everlasting spring, from whence arise
"All the bright schemes, and well-contriv'd designs,
"That Love in its omnipotence could form."

Let the modest and enquiring Reader condescend to supply these acknowledged defects: let him begin again, and continue, this interminable Theme, with increasing rapture, and joy. Let it be his Refuge, in life; his Repose, in death; his Triumph, for ever. Amidst a thousand temptations and snares, difficulties and fears, trials and woes, let him be always mindful, that there are certain properties in it, which will afford him support and comfort in every possible condition of calamity, and distress: that there is a Freeness in the divine Grace, an Extent, a Preciousness, a Fulness, and a Perpetuity, which, after all that *can* be said, will *abundantly exceed!* Let him meditate, therefore, much and often, on Ps. xxxvi. 7——9. . Is. lv. 8, 9. . Rom. v. 15——21. Eph. iii. 14——21*.

* We are so much in the careless, irreligious habit of reading these passages in a formal, cursory way, that we enter no more into the spirit and glory of them, than if they were some composition of a merely human Pen! It

Encompassed, as we are, with many a care—born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward—and living, as we do, in a World of vanity and vexation, of sin and sorrow—where shall we betake ourselves for a never-failing Ground of tranquillity, and solace? Let us never forget, that, to be the Objects of the divine *Love*, to be the Vessels of divine *Mercy*, to be the Children of divine *Grace*, and to "taste the *Loving-kindness* of the Lord," is the perfect consummation of all possible Bliss, for time, and in eternity.

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will be of more consequence to the pious Reader to ruminate on the language made use of in such passages, than to have his Mind diverted from it, by any critical Annotations, or diffuse Commentary. Let him observe accurately, both the strength and the copiousness of expression, designedly adopted by the inspired Writers, to give us the most exhilarating, and even incomprehensible views of the *exceeding riches* of the divine Mercy, Grace, and Love. Had I a Voice of thunder, I would make it roar, in the ear of every christian Teacher,

"GO, AND DO THOU LIKEWISE."

" These are the thoughts that make Man, Man;
" The Wise illumine, aggrandize the Great.
" How short our correspondence with the Sun!
" And while it lasts, inglorious! Our best deeds,
" How wanting in their weight! Our highest Joys,
" Small cordials to support us in our pain,
" And give us strength to suffer. But, how great
" To call Heaven's rich unfathomable Mines
" Our own! to rise in grandeur, as in bliss—
" Initiate in the secrets of the Skies!
" In empire high, or in proud science deep,
" Ye " born of earth! on what can ye confer,
" With half the dignity, with half the gain,
" The gust, the glow of rational delight,
" As on *this* theme—which angels praise, and share?
" Man's fates and favours are a theme in Heav'n!"

Rev. v.

ΑΝΑΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΩΣΙΣ·

OR,

GENERAL DIAGRAM:

in which, it is purposed to demonstrate to every understanding—from the most unlettered, to the most acute and comprehensive, minds—and, without any of the arts of Logic, Sophistry, or Perversion, that,

CHRISTIANITY

IS

A RELIGION OF GRACE:

and, that this, in every proper view, that can be taken of it from the sacred Writings, is its *most discriminative Characteristick:* so that, if it be not thus represented, it is not the *christian* Religion.

Το Ευαγγελιον της χαριτος τυ Θευ.

"Weigh, and weigh well, the wondrous *Truths* I have in view: which cannot be weighed too much: which, the more they are weighed, amaze the more: which, to have supposed, before they were revealed, would have been as great madness—and to have presumed on, as great sin—as it is now madness and sin, not to believe. Such precious and beatifying news is brought us by REVELATION: that Revelation, which is rejected and despised, by those, who *affect* to be thought wiser, and happier, than the rest of mankind." YOUNG.

" What we admire, we praise: and, when we praise,
" Advance it into notice—that its worth
" Acknowledg'd, others may admire it too.
" I therefore recommend, though at the risk
" Of popular disgust, yet boldly still,
" The cause of *Piety*, and *sacred Truth*,
" And *Virtue*—with the *Means*, which GOD ordain'd
" Should best secure them, and promote them most.
" Hopeless indeed that dissipated minds
" And profligate abusers of this world
" Should seek the guiltless joys, that I describe,
" Allured by my report." COWPER *.

Unde Voluntatis sanctæ subsistit Origo,
Unde animis Pietas insit, et unde Fides;
Adversùm ingratos, falsa et virtute superbos,
. . . . . excolui.
Quos si tranquillâ studeas cognoscere curâ,
Tutus ab adverso turbine, Lector, eris.
Nec libertate arbitrii rapiere rebellis,
Ulla nec audebis dona negare Dei.
Sed bona quæ tibi sunt, operante fatebere Christo,
Non esse ex merito sumpta, sed ad meritum.

PROSP.

Τα μερη προς αυτο το ολον δει σκοπειν, ει συμφωνα και αρμοττοντα εκεινω. PLOTIN.

* Should any apology be demanded for the frequent use, that has been made of this charming and instructive Poet, it shall be offered in the language of a moral and critical Satirist, who knew how to appreciate his intellectual worth.

" With England's Bard, with COWPER, who shall vie?
" Original in strength and dignity;

God.

"Of all objects of contemplation, the supreme Being must necessarily be both the most interesting and the most grand. His eternity, his immensity, his irresistible power, his infinite knowledge and unerring wisdom, his inflexible justice and rectitude, his supreme government, conducting all the movements of this vast Universe to the noblest ends, and in the wisest manner, are objects, which fill the utmost capacity of the Soul, and reach far beyond its comprehension."

But now, what is the particular point of light, in which this adorable Object exhibits himself to us in his own special Revelation, of his nature, perfections, and will? and, as "calling us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus?"

"With more than Painter's fancy blest, with lays
"Holy, as Saints to heav'n, expiring, raise."
Των Μουσων ιερη Δοσις!
PURSUITS OF LITERATURE.

The remarkable *Title*, which is given him, on that occasion, is this—THE GOD OF ALL GRACE. 1 Pet. v. 10. By which he is evidently proposed to our Faith, and Hope, and Love, as the Fountain of all that Grace, to which we must apply for a free, perfect, and everlasting Salvation.

What, again, was the eternal Origin of the Redemption of the World by Jesus Christ? THE GRACE OF GOD. Hebr. ii. 9, 10. Rom. v. 15.

JESUS CHRIST.

What was the Motive, which induced The Messiah to engage in the arduous undertaking of Mediation between God and Man? so far, as that Motive respected the guilty criminals, in whose behalf he interfered. It was, "THE GRACE of our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts xv. 11. . . 2 Cor. viii. 9.

What is that Fulness, which is said to be laid up in Him, for every purpose

of complete, plenteous, and eternal Redemption? It is a fulness of GRACE. John i. 14——17. Col. i. 18——20. . . . 2 Thes. iii. 18. Jude xxi. And hence, the language of the celestial Inhabitants, in Rev. v. 11——13.

Why hath it pleased God to bless his redeemed people with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly things *in Christ Jesus*?"—To "the praise of the Glory of his GRACE;" and, "that he might shew forth the exceeding riches of his GRACE." Eph. i. 6, 7. . . . Eph. ii. 7.

THE HOLY GHOST.

In the Œconomy of Redemption, what is one of the peculiar Names, by which the third person in the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity is distinguished? He is expressly called, "THE SPIRIT OF GRACE." Heb. x. 29. "The blood of the Covenant," as it is there denominated, was the most sublime expression of *the Grace* of

God, and, as such, it was attested on the day of Pentecost, by the holy Ghost: who is the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of faith, the Spirit of holiness, and, in all these, "The Spirit of Grace."

The Scriptures.

What is "The Word of God?"

It is the Word of life, the Word of reconciliation, the Word of salvation, and, "The Word of his Grace." Acts xiv. 3. . . . 20. 32. For, the very Design of it is, to reveal to us the Nature, the Extent, and the inestimable Value, of the Grace of God.

Religion.

In what manner is the Whole of true Religion, and christian Virtue, occasionally stated in the inspired Volume? By, "The Grace of God." Acts xiii. 43. Eph. iv. 1——7. . . . 2 Cor. xii. 9. . . . . Phil. i. 6, 7.

What is *Christianity* itself? "The Dispensation of THE GRACE of GOD:" or, the Œconomy of divine Grace, Η οικονομια της Χαριτος τυ Θευ. Eph. iii. 2. . . . 1 Pet. v. 12.

THE GOSPEL.

How is it, that the Gospel is particularly characterized in the sacred Scriptures? Sometimes, as "the Gospel of Christ;" then, as "the Gospel of Peace;" and then, as "the Gospel of our Salvation;" but, more especially, as "THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD." And why? Because it contains in it the most illustrious display of the divine Grace to mankind. Acts xx. 24. . . . 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. . . 1 Pet. i. 10——12*.

* I cannot deny myself the pleasure of presenting the Reader with a brief Analysis of this most important and comprehensive passage. 1. The "*Salvation*" of Christ was the great subject of anxious Enquiry to the Prophets of old time. 2 Pet. i. 16——21. . . 2. All the blessings of the christian Redemption are virtually included in the above term, "GRACE." . . . 3. The Spirit of inspira-

What are *the Essentials* of this Gospel? "GRACE, Mercy, and Peace, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord." 1 Cor. i. 3——9. . . 2 Cor. i. 2. Gal. i. 3. . . . Eph. ii. 2, 3.

MINISTERS.

By what Favour or Power is it, that we

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tion is "*The Spirit of Christ.*" . . . 4. To preach "*The Gospel,*" is, to proclaim the Redemption and Salvation of *Grace* in Christ Jesus. . . . 5. The Revelation of Scripture was not completed, till the holy Ghost was sent down from heaven, after the Ascension of the Messiah. John xiv. 15——18. . . xv. 26. . . . xvi. 7——15. . . 6. The Gospel must be of divine Origin. . . . 7. The very "Angels desire to look into those things," which some Men neglect, and others despise! *To look into,* παρακυπτειν; the word signifies, most heedfully to pry into a thing: propenso collo et accuratè introspicere in aliquid; omni studio incumbere; summa diligentia explorare. This is supposed by some to have been typically prefigured by the Cherubim of glory over-shadowing the Mercy-seat of the holy of holies. . . Exod. xxv. 18——20. Thus, "the Angels cannot be satisfied with a transient view; they are anxious to investigate the Mysteries of redeeming love, with the most eager and penetrating inquisition—full of wonder, enquiry, and delight."—What an Example is *here,* for public Teachers, and private Christians!

have any apostolical Preachers of sacred Truth?

By the "*Grace of God.*" Acts iv. 33. . . Rom. xii. 3, 6. . . . xv. 15. . . . 1 Cor. iii. 10. . . xv. 10. . . Eph. iii. 8. . iv. 7——16. . Jer. iii. 15.

What is the *peculiar* nature of the christian Ministry?

To "*testify,*" [διαμαρτυρασθαι, exactly and thoroughly to testify,] "the Gospel of the Grace of God." Acts xx. 24.

CHRISTIANS.

By what unusual kind of phraseology are the Saints and Servants of the most high God sometimes pointed out to us in holy Writ? By, "The Remnant according to *the Election of Grace.*" Rom. xi. 5,6*.

* Predetermined, never to disquiet the world, or myself with any polemical Controversies, I am not arguing here, whether the Apostle refer to an exclusive choice of

What is the christian State? *A State of Grace.* Rom. v. 2. . . vi. 14, 15. . . . . Hebr. xii. 15. . . 1 Pet. v. 12. All pretensions to Piety, Goodness, and Morals, where there is no solicitude of Mind, whether we are indeed in *such* a State, as this, are a gross delusion, and may prove in the end fatal.

What then is a State of Salvation? It is, "*to know the Grace of God in truth.*" Col. i. 6. And this is what I suppose to be intended, by *christian Experience*, or experimental Religion: which is nothing more than *a Consciousness* of my being personally acquainted with such things, as the Scriptures assure me are essentially requi-

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Nations, Churches, or *Individuals*; [though the term, *Remnant*, seems applicable only to the last,] but that, in either instance, it is *entirely of Grace:* otherwise, there can be no decided meaning in the simplest language, and the Scriptures must remain for ever unintelligible—but to those, who possess the unenviable learning, and talent, of making quidlibet ex quolibet, or, of rendering the Bible itself the very scorn of Infidelity. 2 Thess. ii. 11——14.

site to the christian State, the christian Character, the christian Peace, Hope, and Happiness. Will any man betray such a malignity of hatred, towards every thing that is *really* christian, as to pronounce this irrational, extravagant, enthusiastic? Compassion itself would oblige us to deplore so great a depravity of nature, and taste *.—

* I wish I could give an inquisitive Mind a still more luminous account of *experimental Religion*: but, admitting it to be incapable of any other, that would be no argument against its *reality*.

A foreign Writer, sufficiently apprehensive of every thing visionary and fanatical, has nevertheless affirmed, that, "in regard to Religion, we should not only take the way of Reason and Faith, in arriving at the knowledge of truth and certainty—but, of *Experience*. For, on this experimental knowledge all depends: since nothing can supply the want of it; and because all the other kinds of knowledge, unless they are connected with this, are incapable of rendering us happy. As to the nature and quality of these spiritual Experiences, what are they but the Feeling of the good effects, which Religion has upon us; of the happy changes it works in our Sentiments, our Judgments, our Inclinations, our Actions, and our Pleasures. These effects, however, arise from two different Causes: one, being the proper and peculiar force of Religion; and the other, the particular assistance of the Spi-

By what Energy is it, that we are any of us *effectually* called to the saving knowledge of divine things—to glory, and virtue? Consult Gal. i. 6, 15. . . . Eph. iv. 7. . . . 2 Tim. i. 9. . . . 1 Pet. v. 10. Acts xi. 21——23.

How are we justified in the sight of God? "Freely, *by his Grace.*" Rom. iii. 23, 24*.

What is the Righteousness, by which we are justified? "*A Righteousness of Grace,* and Faith"—which is the Gift of God. Rom. v.

It is particularly requested, that this

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rit of God. This idea is perfectly clear, and coincides with the nature of our Mind."

* Δικαιωμενοι δωρεαν, *Gratis—i. e.* ex gratuito dono ac mera liberalitate; ita ut non modo antecedentia, sed etiam consequentia fidem, opera excludantur—cum de illa Justitia quæritur cujus unius virtute subsistimus: quod ut planius etiam fieret, adjunxit Apostolus τη αυτου Χαριτι, *ipsius gratia.* BEZA.

whole Chapter may be perused with the utmost care, and without any comment: and then, what is the natural Condition of the persons, for whom the Saviour is said to have died? They were "*Sinners—ungodly*"—in a state of "*condemnation*"—and, "*without Strength.*" . . . What are the Benefits, they are said to derive from his mediatorial Undertaking? They are "*justified;*" they are "*reconciled to God;*" they are "*saved from wrath;*" and, they obtain "*Righteousness, Peace, Hope, Joy,* and *eternal Life,* through Jesus Christ our Lord:" and all this, in such a way, as that "GRACE *may reign.*" Can any thing, but the most artful and subtile enmity to obvious Truth, give the Chapter any other interpretation? Which is still further confirmed, by Gal. ii. 16, 21. . . v. 4. Tit. iii. 3——7 *.

* If human authority could possibly add any thing to the Testimony of Inspiration, we could easily select quotations from Writers in the purest age of the christian Church; from Clement, Polycarp, Justin, and Irenæus. But, we have already exceeded our limits—and have been compelled to omit much, that we were anxious to insert.

Why are we "*justified by Faith?*" It is of Faith—that it might be *by Grace.* Rom. iv. 4——6, 14——16. . . Acts xviii. 27.

How are we to obtain *the Remission of our Sins?* Through "the riches of *divine Grace.*" Eph. i. 6, 7. Col. i. 12——14. . . Acts xiii. 39.

What is the primary efficacious Cause of Faith? The *Grace* of God. Acts xviii. 27.

How are we *saved?* "*By Grace* through Faith." Eph. ii. 8, 9. . . Tit. ii. 11——14. Acts xv. 11.

Why are we to be saved in this particular mode? Consult Eph. ii. 7.

Could we flatter ourselves with the prospect of public encouragement, they might appear, Εαν ο Κυριος θελησῃ, on some future occasion. In the mean time, let not the vain and haughty Sons of artificial Erudition disdain the simple style, in which these great matters are conveyed to us in holy Writ. Christianity, like its divine Author, is "a Guide of the blind, a Light to them that sit in darkness, an Instructor of the foolish, and a Teacher of babes."

What is the inexhaustible Source of all personal Holiness, Excellence, Virtue, and acceptable Service? *The divine Grace.* 1 Cor. xv. 10. . . . 2 Cor. i. 12. . . ix. 8. . . 2 Tim. ii. 1. . . Hebr. xii. 28. . . xiii. 9. Zechar. xii. 10. . . Col. iii. 16. Eph. iv. 29.

How is the christian Progress, or Advancement, in the divine Life, represented in the Scriptures? By "*growth in Grace.*" 2 Pet. iii. 18.

What are the Treasures, which God hath promised to the humble? The treasures of *Grace.* . . Jam. iv. 6. . . 1 Pet. v. 5.

What is the Security, and Stability of the Soul, as to its supreme Happiness? *Divine Grace.* . . . 2 Cor. xii. 9. . . Hebr. xiii. 9.

Where must we apply for all spiritual Blessings in heavenly things? To "*the Throne of Grace.*" Hebr. iv. 16.

What is the greatest Good, we can possibly wish to any human Being? "*The Grace of God.*" Eph. vi. 24. . . 1 Thess. v. 28. Rev. xxii. 21.

What is the Consummation of all earthly Felicity? See 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

What is Heaven? "*The Grace*, which is to be brought unto us at the Revelation of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. i. 13.

To what are the perfect Unity and Unanimity of the first christian Church, founded by the Apostles, ascribed? To "*the great Grace*, which was upon them all." Acts iv. 32——35.

What will be the everlasting Theme and Song of Gratitude, and Praise, to the whole Church of God, when triumphant in Glory? "GRACE, GRACE." Zechar. iv. 6, 7.

Αυτη εςι αληθινη Χαρις τυ Θευ*.

* The very *Simplicity*, however, of such a Statement of the christian Religion will be sufficient to render it dis-

It will be no surprise at all to this Writer, should the majority of those, who have patience enough to conduct them through these pages, exclaim, "What *new* doctrine is this!" The general ignorance, of pure, original Christianity, is melancholy beyond expression*. Totally detached from all Sects, and Parties, a more

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gusting, in this *enlightened* and *refined* Age! though one of the most elegant of the latin Fathers long ago observed, Simplex et nuda Veritas est luculentior; quia satis ornata per se est: adeoque ornamentis extrinsecus additis fucata *corrumpitur*: mendacium verò specie placet aliena.

LACTANTIUS.

Dilucida et negligenter quoque omnibus aperta; ut in animum Veritas, tanquam Sol in oculos, etiamsi in eam non intendatur, occurrat. Quare, non ut intelligere possit, sed ne omnino possit non intelligere, curandum.

* If any doubt be entertained, whether the national Church supports this idea of Religion, perpend the nature of her *Doctrines*, and the character of all her *Devotions*. Look particularly into the language of her *Collects*—and, especially, into those for, Advent 1. . . . . 4. . . . . Innocents' day. . . . Epiphany 1. . . . 5. . . . Lent 1. . . . 4. . . Easter day. . . . After Easter 2. . . . Trinity Sunday. . . . After Tri-

isolated Being, who is not quite cast on a desert Island, can scarce exist. In such a

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nity 1. . . . 11. . . . 17. . . . 18.——This is only a brief Specimen of the Style and Spirit, which pervades all her Institutions. She recognizes no Religion of *Reason*, *Philosophy*, *Free-will*, or *Self-determination*. Examine her *Articles*, 9. 10. 13. 17. . . . and her *Collects*, for Ash-wednesday; Lent, 2. Easter, 4. 5. Whitsunday. Trinity 1. 4. 6. 7. 9. 13. 15. 19. 25. Let the Millions, who *profess* the national Faith, study their own Religion, in these Articles, and Collects—if they wish *to understand it*. For, is it not an exercise of Candour, at the expence of Truth and Fact, to admit, that, in the long run, more than five in fifty are acquainted with the import of either?

Perfectly willing to account to the Public, for any Zeal I have shewn, in illustrating *the great Fundamentals* already stated, be it observed, that, "To seek Salvation by the deeds of the Law, is, in effect, to subvert the very nature and design of Salvation by Jesus Christ: that, on the ground of Justification by works, the whole mediatorial Work of Jesus Christ, and the Agency of the Holy Ghost, would be superseded altogether; for, "*if Righteousness come by the Law, Christ is dead in vain*," and, "*The Grace of God*" is utterly frustrated: that, the Doctrines, we oppose, are calculated in their obvious tendency to flatter the Vanity, and feed the Pride, of the human heart—to promote *Boasting*, and to destroy *Humility*: and that, there could be no Certainty of salvation, were it not founded on *Faith*, and *Grace*. Rom. iv. 16."

peculiarity of Situation, these thoughts have been penned; in the direct view of that eventful moment, when his Judges, and his Critics, will appear together with him at an eternally decisive Bar: and, if he has not given the most accurate statement of *The Religion of the Bible*, with all the assistance he could derive from close investigation, undisturbed solitude, and persevering application to "The Father of lights," he is utterly incapable of discerning *what it is*, or *what it means*.

The almost entombed tranquillity, in which his moments are gliding away, has afforded him this opportunity of taking a calm review of a System of sacred Truth, he has often contemplated—would he could say, with all that unceasing and holy estimation it justly merits! and, notwithstanding the numerous defects, which superior Minds will easily discover, it will be acknowledged, he hopes, that he has erected an Edifice with artless simplicity; that, its Basis is, the very Founda-

tion which infinite Wisdom itself has laid; that, it is disfigured by no needless ornaments; that, it is illuminated only by the beams of "The Sun of righteousness;" and, that nothing has been proclaimed in it, but the riches, and the glory, of

DIVINE GRACE*.

* He has therefore taken some pains to arrange in the most perfect order, and in one comprehensive scale, no less than thirty Arguments, to ascertain his grand Position—that, *Real Christianity is a Religion of Grace.* Si non possint valere, ut dicit Quintilianus, quia magna sunt, valebunt quia multa sunt, quæ ad ejusdem rei probationem omnia spectant. So that, if, either from our own reasoning Powers, or from any public Instruction, we form to ourselves a different idea of Religion, it is perfectly clear to his understanding, that, it is not *Christianity.* And this he says, not for the gratification of any personal vanity, or conceit—μη γενοιτο· but, *for the Truth's sake.* 2 Cor. xiii. 8.

Far be it from *such* a Writer, to entertain an idea so presumptuous, as that of conveying any information to the *learned* Students in either of our famous Universities: to which, they are supposed to retreat, for the special purpose of "seeking and intermeddling *in all Wisdom:*" but if there should be such an irregular, such an unpardonable Anomaly, in those Seats of universal Science, as an academical Lounger, Idler, Trifler, Rambler, Saunterer, or fashionable Coxcomb, it might perchance be worth his while, in

He might perhaps have fainted in the prosecution of this humble attempt, had he not met with this ecouraging excitement in one of our public Journals. "This is a subject"—alluding to religious instruction—" respecting which, more than any other, we may say, Nil actum, si quid

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some indolent, lazy moment, to pop into this *Temple of Truth*. Who can tell, but that he might pick up a sentiment, or two, in an easy, genteel, *en-passant* way, which may eventually turn to good account! Possibly he might collect a hint, or so, which may assist him in discovering the truth of Reason; the truth of Virtue; the truth of Pleasure; in a word, that Truth which is as immortal as its Author, Object, and End.

" The love of Truth," says a great Philosopher, " is *strong* in every *well-disposed* Mind: but, men are prone to be led too much by Authority in their opinions; and there are persons in the world of so mean and abject a spirit, that they may be called mere beggars with regard to their opinions: through laziness and indifference about *Truth*, they leave to others the drudgery of digging for this commodity; they can have enough at second hand to serve their occasions. Their concern is not to know what is true, but what is said and thought on such and such subjects; and their understanding, like their Clothes, is cut according to the Fashion."

superesset agendum. Still there are many persons, who require additional information upon their most important concerns, and an invigorated attention to their eternal interests. The various arts, which ingenious Self-love employs, to hide men from themselves, call for a diversified application of the means of counteraction. A display of *The Standard of Truth* does in reality, what is attributed in romance to the fabulous Shield and Ring—it dissipates the illusions of Self-complacence, and shews without disguise the true state of our disagreement with "THE WORD OF GOD."

In conducting the Reader to this Temple, he might have been led a circuitous route through all the ancient Mythology of Egypt, India, Phœnicia, Persia, and Greece: he might have been introduced, successively, to all the various Schools of the pythagorean, the stoical, and the atheistic Philosophy: but, has not our time been devoted to a much more valuable

purpose—in elucidating the elementary principles of divine Revelation? Taught by celestial Wisdom, what occasion have we to apply to the milesian Thales, the persian Zoroaster, the chinese Confucius, the samian Sage, the sublime Plato, or the acute and profound Aristotle? From them, we may indeed collect some stores of *human Learning*; but, for *The Science of Salvation*, we must look to a very different quarter. To that quarter, I have been aiming to excite the utmost attention, in these leaves. Let them be judged only according to their *Intent*, and I am secure of the approving smile of every amiable, every candid, every benevolent Heart. In this pleasing hope, I retire from my honest, and disinterested, however unavailing Essay, to serve mankind, as to their highest interests—their *immortal* Concerns. And now,

" Almighty THOU, whence ev'ry Being rose,
" In whom they safe exist, and soft repose:
" Fix'd in whose pow'r, and open to whose eye,
" Immense, these copious worlds of wonder lie;

" To Me, the meanest of thy works, descend—
" To Me, the last of ev'ry Being, bend:
" Since not exempt, in thy paternal Care,
" The lowest triumph, and minutest share.
" In want and weakness be THY GRACE display'd,
" And Thou assist, where else no arm can aid.
" But if—as surely ev'ry Mortal must—
" If now I hasten to my kindred dust—
" In that dread hour, from the devouring deep,
" The spark of deathless animation keep:
" Then may my Soul, as bright instinctive flame
" Aspiring then, thy kindred radiance claim:
" Up to thy Heav'n of peace the Trembler raise—
" Though there *the least*, the first to sing thy praise."

1 Tim. i. 17.

Exegi.

Recedo.

FINIS.

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